

HOPE

HEALTH LETTER



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

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Outdoor exercise has remarkable effects on mental health

Researchers at the University of Essex in England found that spending just five minutes a day doing a "green activity" like walking, gardening, or cycling may be enough to improve your mood and boost your self-esteem.

All natural environments, including parks in towns or cities, provide "green benefits," but the study found that areas with water seem to have the most positive effect.

Source: *Journal of Environmental Science & Technology*, Vol. 44, pg.3649

4 terrific ways to tame anxiety

- 1. Slow down, step away from your problems and put them in perspective.** Instead of aiming for perfection, which is impossible, be proud of how close you get.
- 2. Take the power out of your automatic negative thoughts.** It may sound surprising, but trying to avoid negative thoughts can make them even more powerful. When you find yourself saying things like "I'm stupid" or anything else scary or negative, constantly repeat the thought to yourself out loud. Psychologists have discovered that if we keep saying something over and over — about 50 to 100 times — it loses all meaning and the power to hurt us. Hint: Don't believe the words — just repeat them until they lose power.
- 3. Reach out to help someone else.** It's a sure-fire way to make yourself feel better and forget about your problems, if only for a while.
- 4. Focus on what's positive about the present** instead of dwelling on the past or worrying about the future. Meditation, deep breathing, and listening to music are ways to help you stay in the present moment.

Editor's note: If anxiety is ongoing and interferes with your daily functioning, seek professional help.

Sources: *Anxiety Disorders Association of America*; *Leave Your Mind Behind, The Everyday Practice of Finding Stillness Amid Rushing Thoughts*, by Matthew McKay, PhD, and Catherine Sutker, New Harbinger Publications

The real costs of caregiving



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Amazing apples

Why this age-old favorite could be the next ‘super fruit’



Most types of apples are now available year round, but fall is the peak time to enjoy locally grown apples in their myriad varieties — 2,500 different types are grown in the U.S.

Here are the core facts on some popular favorites:

VARIETY	QUALITIES AND BEST USES
Braeburn	Firm and hard with a tangy-spicy flavor. Good for all types of uses.
Empire	Crisp and juicy, sweet flavor. Also a multi-purpose variety.
Fuji	Firm and sweet. Named for Mt. Fuji in Japan, where it was developed. Good for snacking and sauces. Stores very well.
Golden Delicious	Firm and juicy. Best flavor may develop in cooking. Pies made with this variety need less sugar.
Granny Smith	Hard and very tart. Adds a zing to salads. Delicious in sauces and pies.
Honey Crisp	Crisp, juicy, and sweet — but not too sweet. This new variety is great for snacking and salads and also stores well.
Jonagold	Blend of Jonathan and Golden Delicious. Sweet-tart flavor makes it perfect for baking whole.
McIntosh	Very aromatic and spicy. Soft flesh cooks down easy for sauces. Does not keep well.
Pink Lady	One of the newest varieties on the market. Soft pink color, sweet, tangy, and versatile.
Red Delicious	Most well-known apple in the U.S. Slightly firm flesh and sweet taste make it an ideal snack.
Rome Beauty	Crisp, tart, with very thick skin. Best for baking whole, but not recommended for pies.

Sources: U.S. Apple Association; Washington State University Cooperative Extension

Move over blueberries and pomegranates. In addition to being the perfect portable snack (no refrigeration or peeling required) apples are:

- Sodium free
- Fat free
- Cholesterol free
- A natural source of health-promoting antioxidants and other nutrients
- Packed with soluble fiber — the type that can lower “bad cholesterol” and help maintain steady blood sugar levels
- A budget-friendly food — both for calories and your pocketbook

Spicy Apple-Filled Squash

The comforting flavors of fall

- 1 acorn squash (about 1 lb.)
- 1 Golden Delicious apple, peeled, cored, and sliced
- 2 tsp. melted butter or margarine
- 2 tsp. brown sugar
- 1/8 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. nutmeg
- Dash ground cloves

Heat oven to 350°F Grease a 1-quart baking dish. Halve squash and remove seeds; cut into quarters. Place quarters, skin side up, in dish and cover; bake 30 minutes. Meanwhile, in medium bowl, combine apple, butter, brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves. Turn cut sides of acorn squash up; top with apple mixture. Cover and bake 30 minutes longer or until apples are tender. Serves 4. Per serving: 88 calories, 1 g protein, 17 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 3 g fat, 24 mg sodium.

Source: Washington State Apple Commission

Snacking tip

Cut apples across the core to make round circles that can hold slices of cheese or a dollop of peanut butter, and you won't need crackers.

For best flavor, eat apples at room temperature, but store them in the refrigerator — they'll last up to 10 times longer.

To get the most fiber, choose an apple or applesauce instead of juice.

get moving

ONE-MINUTE OFFICE REFRESHERS

Easy ways to tap into your hidden energy

- Raise your arms above your head and stretch in the opposite direction from which your body is in most of the day.
 - Stand and shake your hands and arms, then each leg and foot, one at a time.
 - Roll your shoulders up and back 6 to 10 times.
 - With your palms facing forward, pull your arms back, squeeze your shoulder blades and then hold for 5 seconds.
 - Take your left wrist with your right hand and gently stretch to the right. Switch sides and repeat.
 - Rest your eyes periodically by focusing on a distant object at least every 30 minutes for 20 seconds.
 - Switch positions frequently and stand while taking a phone call or talking to a co-worker.
- Tip:** frequent mini-breaks of 60 seconds every 20 to 30 minutes are better than one long break.

Sources: Group Health Cooperative, Seattle; Office Yoga, Simple Stretches for Busy People, by Darrin Zeer, Chronicle Books

MUSCLES ON THE MOVE

Everyday activities that build strength and endurance

If you're a...	You can...
New mom	Practice lifting an empty car seat so you can easily wrangle it in and out of a car. Use that stroller you got for a baby-shower gift to take your child for a walk as often as possible.
Garden lover	Hoist bags of soil and pots. Just remember to lift with your legs — not your back. Rake leaves and mow the lawn with a hand mower.
Office worker	Climb stairs to strengthen your leg muscles and improve your endurance.
Neat freak	Rev up the pace when you vacuum, dust, and wash windows.
Frequent flyer	Walk around the airport while you're waiting for a flight; lift your luggage while you're hailing a cab.
Car buff	Wash and wax your car to work your arms and stay flexible.
Animal lover	Walk dogs at a homeless-animal shelter.
Senior citizen	Strengthen your legs by getting in and out of a chair without using your arms. Improve your balance by standing on one foot at a time when you're waiting in line — but make sure to hold on to a wall or railing if you feel unsteady.
Political activist	Walk door to door to campaign for your candidate.
Bargain hunter	Cruise the entire shopping mall to check for sales before you make any purchases.

For a fun fall outing

Head out to a local farm to enjoy the fall air and hunt for the perfect pumpkin or explore a corn maze. Getting your hands dirty and digging into local agriculture is an invigorating outdoor activity as well as an educational outing.



Doc Talk

POWER TO THE PATIENT

Be An Office Visit Buddy

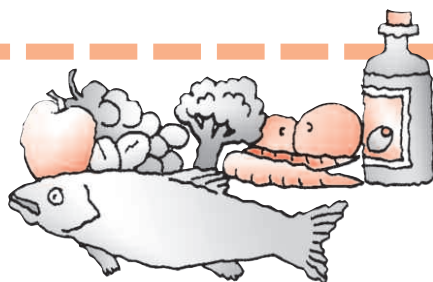
I appreciate it when a patient brings a companion to their routine doctor visit — a spouse, adult child, another relative, or a friend. Research has found that patients with office visit companions have higher satisfaction with their doctor's technical skills, information-giving skills, and interpersonal skills. They are also more than four times more likely to actively participate in their medical decision-making than patients without such companions. If you have a loved one planning a doctor's visit, consider the following:

1. Share the benefits of having an office visit companion.
2. Offer to be an office visit companion.
3. Describe the role you would play in the visit — asking questions of your loved one, prompting them to talk, and asking for their opinion.
4. Let your loved one know how being a companion would make you feel good.

If your loved one is resistant to the idea, ask if you can help prepare for the visit by working together to create a list of issues and questions. After the visit, review and discuss the doctor's insights and recommendations. Perhaps working together will help reassure your loved one of the value you can bring if you were to accompany them on the next office visit. It may also help companions feel like they can contribute. Be an office visit buddy and make a difference.

William J. Mayer, MD, MPH
Medical Editor

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



Small efforts, big rewards

Losing just a modest amount of weight through sensible eating may help reduce the narrowing and thickening of the arteries that can increase the risk for heart attack and stroke.

Adults in one two-year study who followed either a Mediterranean-style diet, a low carb diet, or a low fat diet lowered their blood pressure — which led to a reduced blockage of their carotid arteries.

All three diets included lots of fruits and vegetables and only limited amounts of trans fats like those used to make packaged foods. The Mediterranean-style diet also emphasizes healthy fats like those found in fish and olive oil.

Source: *Circulation*, Vol. 121, pg. 1200

Vitamin D & breast cancer

Vitamin D is needed to help the body absorb calcium and build strong bones, but on-going research suggests that vitamin D supplements may also play an important role in preventing certain types of cancer.

In one Canadian study, women who took a daily supplement of at least 400 IU of vitamin D had a 24% lower risk of developing breast cancer.

The minimum daily allowance for vitamin D is 400 IU, but many experts now recommend taking a daily supplement of 1,000 IU or more. You may want to talk to your doctor about the benefits of taking a supplement of greater than 400 IU every day.

Source: *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Vol. 91, pg. 1699

Healthy

Timely Wellness News & Ideas

Watch them like a hawk

Be mindful to keep small objects and food out of the reach of children, even when you're close to them. Within seconds a child can put something in his or her mouth that may cause choking. Anything that can fit in an empty toilet paper roll (approximately 1 3/4" in diameter) can cause choking.

Foods are the most common choking hazard for children under 3 years of age. Avoid smooth, sticky foods like peanut butter and round, firm foods like hot dogs or carrot sticks unless they are cut into bite-size pieces no larger than 1/2 inch. Whole grapes, popcorn, raisins, nuts, chunks of meat or cheese, and chewing gum are also choking risks.

Sources: *American Academy of Pediatrics*; www.healthychildren.org



Smart Living

Halloween costumes need to be short enough so kids won't trip, and have no mask, so their vision's not obscured.

The dish on dishwashers

Load pans, bowls, and cups facing down in the dishwasher. If they're facing upward, open dishes can catch dirty water and the whole load gets repeatedly bathed in it. When a load isn't clean at the end of the cycle, this may be the reason.

Snip-its!

Do your homework

In addition to knowing the warning signs of stroke, learn which hospitals close to you are the best equipped to treat stroke. Before an emergency strikes, you can locate a certified stroke care hospital on the American Stroke Association Website at www.strokeassociation.org.

Call 911 immediately for any of these stroke warning signs:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the arm, face, or leg, especially on one side
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden loss of vision in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

Note the time first stroke symptoms appear. If given within three hours of the start of symptoms, clot-busting medication may reduce permanent damage for the most common type of stroke.

Source: American Stroke Association

A bright idea for bikers

Make your bike easier to see at night by attaching a glow light that illuminates the ground and makes your bike visible from all angles, not just the front and back.

The lightweight (less than a pound) tube light fits onto the middle of the bike frame, is easy to install and remove, and will give you an edge when it comes to safety.

Info on organic foods

Even if you buy food grown organically, it's still important to follow basic food safety rules.

That includes carefully washing all fruits and vegetables and thoroughly cooking all meat and poultry.

For a food to be labeled organic, it must be produced with no hormones, herbicides, pesticides, antibiotics, or fertilizers made with sewer waste or ingredients that aren't natural.

Organic animal products must come from animals fed only organic feed without antibiotics or hormones. The animals must also be able to spend time outdoors rather than being constantly confined to cages or pens.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture



smart Living



Eat low on the food chain — that means lots of fruits and vegetables, beans, and legumes.

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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• For subscription information, or reprint permission, contact: Hope Health, 350 East Michigan Avenue, Suite 225, Kalamazoo, MI 49007-3853 U.S.A.
• Phone: (269) 343-0770 • E-mail: info@HopeHealth.com • Website: HopeHealth.com
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October Health Observances

Mental Illness

Depression and other mental illnesses disrupt a person's ability to cope with life just as drastically as physical conditions. A great resource for finding help and coping services is the National Alliance on Mental Illness at www.nami.org.

Breast Cancer

In addition to regular mammograms, it's important for women to have a yearly clinical breast exam by a health-care provider to screen for breast cancer.

Mammograms can detect most breast cancer, but dense breast tissue can sometimes interfere with the effectiveness of the test. That's why a clinical exam is also important.

The American Cancer Society recommends yearly mammograms for women beginning at age 40. Always see a doctor as soon as possible if you notice any change in your breasts. www.cancer.org.

Domestic Violence

Men as well as women can be victims of domestic violence, which touches people of all ages, genders, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Information on crisis intervention, safety planning, and referrals to agencies is available on the 24-hour National Domestic Violence hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).

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A 5-step strategy to find solutions

- 1. Define the problem** as specifically and concretely as possible.
- 2. Think of as many solutions as possible** without evaluating them or making judgments. With enough quantity, a certain amount of quality will be produced.
- 3. Evaluate the pros and cons of each solution.** Chances are that one will emerge as the best among the group.
- 4. Select the best solution and try it out.**
- 5. Evaluate how well the solution worked.** If you're not satisfied with the solution, go back to step three and try the second best solution. If that doesn't do the trick, redo step two and think of additional solutions. If you still haven't found a solution, return to step one and redefine the original problem.

Source: *The 60-second Shrink, 101 Strategies for Staying Sane in a Crazy World*, by Arnold A. Lazarus, PhD, ABPP, and Clifford N. Lazarus, PhD, Impact Publishers



the whole you

A FRIEND IN DEED. . .

An action plan for sharing the work of caregiving

Caregiver needs. . .	Friends can offer to. . .
Help with household chores	Clean the house or hire a maid brigade; do the laundry once a week.
Yard work done	Mow the lawn, rake leaves, clean gutters, etc.
Meals prepared	Bring a home-cooked meal on preset days.
Grocery shopping	Go grocery shopping once a week.
Someone to do errands	Pick up prescriptions and other health-care items; deliver and pick up dry cleaning; get the car repaired or serviced.
A night out with friends	Treat for dinner and a movie.
A sitter for my (spouse, parent or child) so I can have some time alone	Stay with the person needing care.
Someone to call in an emergency	Be available and help out whenever needed.
Transportation to doctor's appointments	Schedule rides at a preset time.
More information on available resources	Do some research.
A couple days off	Plan and arrange a weekend getaway.
Emotional support	Make regular phone calls just to find out how things are going.

Source: National Family Caregivers Association

CLASSIC stress relief

Listening to any music you enjoy can lift your spirits and bring moments of peace to a stressful day. Here are some classical music favorites:

- Albinoni's Adagio for Violin, Strings, and Organ in G minor
- Bach's Suite for Orchestra No. 3 "Air on the G String" or Cantata No. 147 (Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring)
- Samuel Barber's Adagio for Strings
- Beethoven's "Moonlight" Sonata
- Debussy's "Clair de Lune" Suite for Piano
- Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 21 in C Major (theme from Elvira Madigan)
- Pachelbel's Canon in D
- Puccini's "O Mio Babbino Caro" (from the opera Gianni Schicchi)
- Saint-Saens' The Swan

fiscal fitness



The real costs of caregiving

If your aging parents need help, there are numerous options, from in-home “homemaker services” to assisted living facilities. Here’s how the costs compare. All are national median rates.

- Licensed homemaker services: \$18/hour
- Licensed home health aide services: \$19/hour
- Adult day health care: \$60/day
- Assisted living facility (one bedroom, single occupancy): \$3,185/month
- Nursing home (private room, skilled nursing care 24 hours a day): \$206/day

Very often, adult children help with the care of elderly parents, especially if they’re nearby and the goal is to keep the parents in their home. The hidden, but very real, cost for those adult children is the impact on work. Many caregivers take a leave of absence from work or quit working entirely.

Sources: Genworth Financial, 7th annual cost of care survey. Read more at www.genworth.com. “Caregiving in the U.S.,” MetLife Mature Market Institute, www.metlife.com/mmi

Just talk about it

Keep the lines of communication open with your aging parents

If you have aging parents, you have issues that need discussion. You also have the decades-long parent-child dynamics to negotiate. Some parents may be very open to adult children’s involvement, while others see it as interference or a sudden new “authority figure.” Try to understand that your now senior-citizen parents may feel threatened, unsure of themselves, or just sad about discussing issues that bring home their own mortality. But it’s important to talk — about their estate plan, financial outlook, and living situation as they age. Your goal, of course, is to let them know you have their interests in mind and gently but firmly offer practical solutions.

HaveTheTalkAmerica.com suggests you get the dialogue going using these tactics:

- **Focus on life — not death.** Remind them that getting estate plans in place can help them live well, not die well.
- **Stress that it’s not about what happens to their “things.”** It’s about what may happen in the future to their health, well-being, and financial security.
- **Put it in writing.** While your parents certainly need legal documents from an attorney or financial professional, use your conversations to create a simple planning or “wishes” document to guide you.

Respect and honor their feelings and wishes. Share your own feelings. Most important, help your aging parents keep as much control as possible over their own decisions, including financial ones.

Toolbox: Need some good tips for having any difficult conversation? Visit www.HaveTheTalkAmerica.com or the MetLife Mature Market Institute at www.metlife.com/mmi. For professional help with estate planning for your parents, visit the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, www.naela.org.

Smart Living



To save money on prescriptions, ask your doctor if there is a generic version of the medication.



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HOPE HEALTH LETTER

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weight control

Tricks for treats

If Halloween candy wilts your willpower and puts your kids on sugar overload, here are some ways to set limits:

- Pack up some of the candy and deliver it to a local shelter or charity. You could even send it to deployed soldiers (visit www.anysoldier.com for details).
- Before the evening is over, sift through your kids' loot and recycle the candy they don't like into your "outgoing" candy bucket.
- Have your kids leave the candy under a pillow so the "Candy Fairy" can exchange it for cash or a gift card.
- For every 20 pieces of candy your kids turn in, let them choose a favorite activity to do with the family, such as a movie, a visit to a park, or an afternoon of bowling.
- Buy Halloween candy that you don't like so you won't be tempted to eat it yourself.
- Give away gum, boxes of raisins, or stickers instead of candy.



Great things happen when kids walk to school

- Kids can practice safe pedestrian skills and learn about the environment.
- Neighborhoods become more kid friendly because there is less traffic and pollution.
- Parents and children can make new friends in the community, and crime rates drop because people are outside keeping an eye on things.
- Kids will do better in school because they are more alert.
- It gets kids — and parents — moving.

October is Walk to School Month. Even if your child's school is not within walking distance, it may be possible for them to walk to a bus stop a few blocks away from home. To learn about how to develop safe walking routes in your community, visit <http://www.walktoschool.org/why/safety.cfm>.

body, mind, & soul

“I was so naïve as a kid I used to sneak behind the barn and do nothing.”

— Johnny Carson

“My husband thinks that health food is anything he eats before the expiration date.”

— Rita Rudner

“One of the best ways to persuade others is with your ears — by listening to them.”

— Dean Rusk

“Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase.”

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

“A hypochondriac is one who can't leave being well enough alone.”

— Unknown