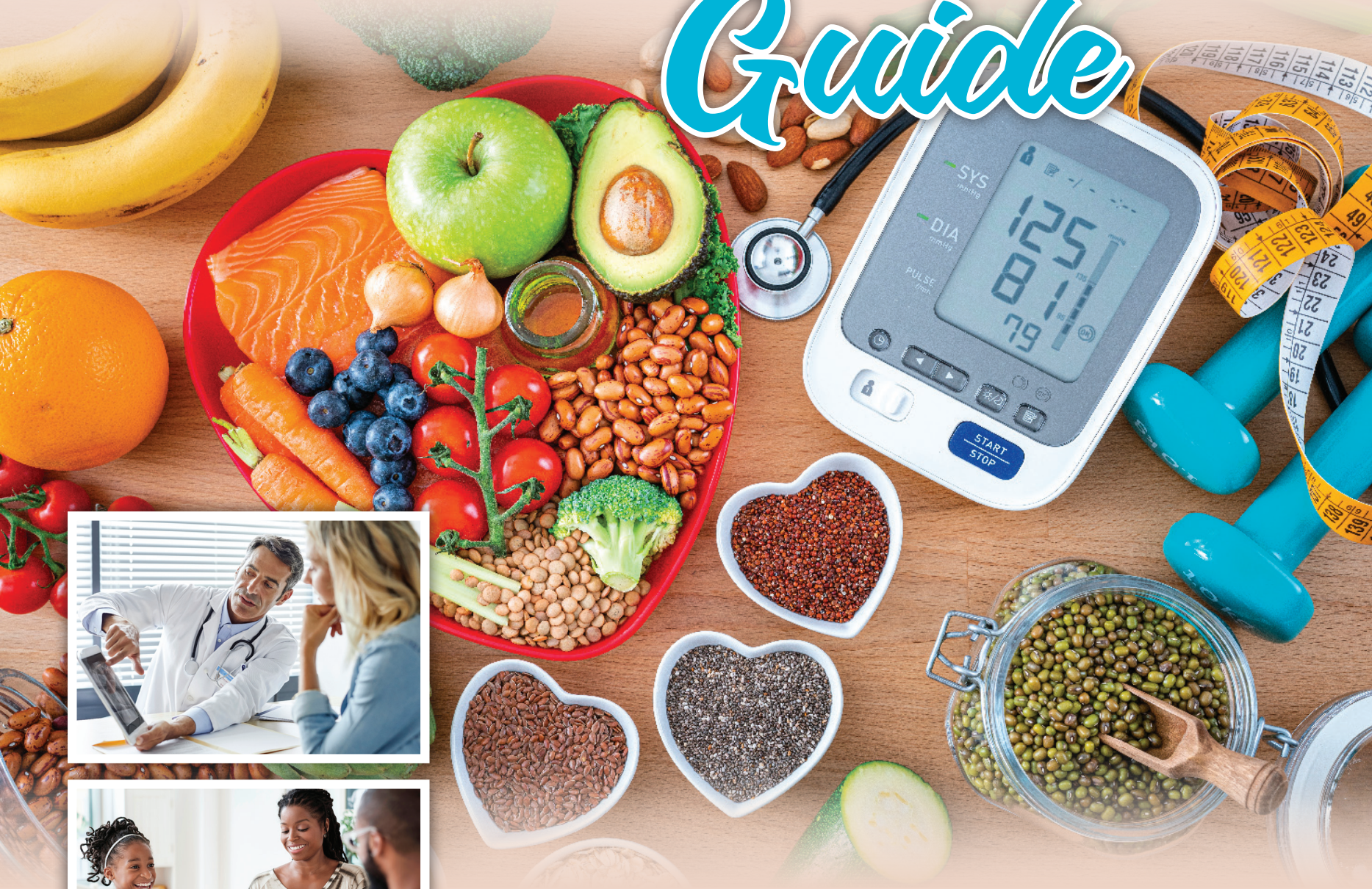


WINTER/SPRING 2025

Healthcare Guide



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Importance of wellness exams increases for adults as they age

Seniors are a growing and increasingly prosperous demographic. As the senior population increases, a greater emphasis must be placed on keeping aging individuals healthy. Wellness checks are important at any age, but they bear even more significance as individuals grow older.

Age brings with it many things, including experience and wisdom. But age also brings an increased risk for health problems. Aging men and women are vulnerable to chronic conditions like heart disease, COPD, cancer, and arthritis. It's noteworthy that many chronic health conditions fail to produce any symptoms until they have progressed to a point where treatment is difficult.

Annual wellness exams can help older adults take charge of their health and stay as healthy as possible. It's possible for a person to preserve his or her health (and possibly life) through check-ups and easy tests. Here are some common screenings and health recommendations that come up in the prime of one's life.

- **Colorectal cancer screening:** A colon cancer screening is recommended for everyone at age 45. Colon cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, and risk increases at age 45. Although people seldom look forward to a colonoscopy and the required prep, putting off this test due to a little discomfort may result in missing colon cancer at its earliest stage when it is most treatable.

- **Cholesterol screening:** This simple blood test can help evaluate the risk for heart disease. High cholesterol can contribute to the buildup of plaque in the arteries, making them narrower and less flexible, according to Sharecare, Inc.

- **Mammogram:** Most health organizations recommend annual mammogram screenings from age 40 until menopause. Then it may be possible to have a mammogram every other year for those who are at average risk. It is important for women to discuss mammogram frequency with their doctors, particularly if

there is a family history of breast cancer.

- **Diabetes:** ChenMed says diabetes may be more common in older adults, so regular screenings for this illness can enable early diagnosis and management.

- **Testicular cancer screening:** This test generally is not recommended without symptoms. Some organizations suggest men with a family history or other risk factors consider performing self-examinations.

- **Vaccination needs:** Doctors can alert patients to recommended vaccinations during wellness exams. Seniors should receive an annual flu shot and updated COVID-19 vaccination as available. Pneumococcal vaccine can protect against pneumococcal disease that can lead to pneumonia, meningitis and bloodstream infections. Adults over 50 also should receive a vaccination for shingles, which can occur in older age in those who have previously experienced chickenpox.

There are additional advantages to routine health checkups. Doctors can inquire about fitness routines, stress, sleep, and diet to see if patients are



Here are some common screenings and health recommendations that come up in the prime of one's life.

within the guidelines for healthy living.

Older age may make a person wiser, but the risk for various health issues and

certain diseases increases with age. Routine health check-ups can keep doctors and patients on the same page.

Up to 80 percent are preventable

7 ways to reduce stroke risk

Stroke is a serious medical condition that results from impaired blood flow to the brain, the consequences of which can be trouble with mobility, speech complications, lack of muscular control, and even death. UTMB Health indicates stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in the United States, but up to 80 percent of all strokes are preventable. These seven strategies can help individuals reduce their risk for stroke.

1. Lower your blood pressure, as hypertension can double or even quadruple stroke risk if it is not controlled. Harvard Health says high blood pressure is the biggest contributor to the risk of stroke in both men and women.

2. Keep a healthy weight, as being overweight or obese increases risk for stroke, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

3. If you smoke, quit. Smoking can lead to hardening of the

arteries that can make it more difficult for blood to flow to the brain, according to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

4. Exercising can help lower blood pressure and keep weight in check, but Harvard Health says it also stands on its own as a method for reducing stroke risk. Reach a rate of exercise that involves breathing hard but still being able to talk.

5. If you drink alcohol, keep it to no more than one to two drinks per day. After which, increased drinking elevates stroke risk sharply.

6. Control cholesterol levels, and have your cholesterol checked at least once every five years, says the CDC.

7. Manage your atrial fibrillation. Afib is an irregular heart-beat that can cause the formation of clots in the heart. These clots can then make their way to the brain. Afib increases stroke risk significantly.

Here are some simple ways to make your diet more nutritious, healthy

Nutritious foods are a cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle. The World Health Organization says a healthy diet protects a person against many chronic noncommunicable diseases, such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes. Nutritious foods also help a person get to or maintain a healthy weight, promote stronger bones and teeth, and positively affect long-term mental health.

People often wonder how they can improve their daily diets. Here are some ways to make meals more nutritious.

- Eat an array of fruits and vegetables. Healthline notes a diet rich in fruits and vegetables has been proven to offer many health benefits. Incorporating a variety of fruits and vegetables into the meals eaten each day will provide fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Vegetables also are low in calories and fat, which aligns with diets designed for weight management. Health experts suggest eating greens and other vegetables first so that you fill up and are therefore less likely to eat fewer, less nutritious foods during each meal.

- Consume sufficient healthy sources of protein. Protein is important for managing hunger and sustaining energy and maintaining muscle. Lean sources of protein are best, and can include skinless poultry, unprocessed lean meats, seafood and fish, legumes, and nuts. Eggs also are excellent sources of protein. Fish tends to be low in calories for the amount of protein it provides.

Try to incorporate oily fish like salmon into your culinary repertoire since it's a source of heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

- Choose whole grain carbohydrates. When selecting breads, cereals, rices, and other carbohydrates, select higher fiber or whole grain varieties. Whole grains contain more fiber than white or refined starches and will help you feel fuller longer.

- Cut down on saturated fats and sugars. Be mindful of food labels when selecting ingredients for meals. Opt for foods that are low in saturated fats, which tend to contribute to an increase in the amount of cholesterol in the blood. Also, regularly consuming foods and beverages high in sugar increases a person's risk for obesity and tooth decay, says the National Health Service of the United Kingdom.

- Practice additional smart eating tips. In addition to the foods eaten, there are ways to eat in a more healthy manner. Slow down when eating and savor the foods. Gauge whether you feel full before going back for another portion. Eating foods off a smaller plate can trick the brain into thinking you ate more, a tactic that can help to reduce portion sizes. Cook and prepare more foods at home where you can control ingredients.

Eating healthy, nutritious foods is a key to long-term well-being.



Eating healthy, nutritious foods is a key to long-term well-being.

5 behaviors that increase cancer risk

Cancer can strike at any time and anywhere in the body. Although sometimes cancer seemingly comes out of the blue, people diagnosed with cancer may be able to trace their disease to certain behaviors that likely increased their risk. The following are various behaviors that researchers have determined can increase cancer risk.

1. Tobacco use

The American Association for Cancer Research says tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of cancer. Quitting tobacco can be the single most effective way to reverse the course of potential cancer development.

2. Alcohol consumption

The Centers for Cancer Control and Prevention says all alcoholic drinks, including red and white wine, beer, and liquor, are linked with cancer. Reducing alcohol consumption or not drinking at all can lower cancer risk.

3. Carrying excess weight

The MD Anderson Cancer Center says the link between obesity and cancer risk is clear. Research shows that

excess body weight and fat increases a person's risk for several cancers, including colorectal, post-menopausal breast, uterine, esophageal, kidney, and pancreatic cancers. Experts believe it is largely due to the inflammation caused by visceral fat, which is the fat that surrounds vital organs.

4. Poor diet

Eating a lot of fast food, processed foods and red meat and consuming sugary drinks can increase the risk of cancer.

5. Failure to protect the skin

UV exposure from the sun or indoor tanning devices can increase the risk of skin cancer developing. In addition to never using tanning beds, individuals should use proper sun protection, including sunscreen, and stay out of the sun during peak hours, which are typically between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Although there are no certainties when it comes to cancer prevention, individuals can modify many behaviors to help reduce their risk for the disease.

Tips to get a more restful night's sleep

There is no magic formula to ensure long-term health. However, if there were such an equation, sleep would be a critical component. Though adults may be able to function with less sleep than doctors recommend, the National Institutes of Health note that consistent lack of sufficient sleep can interfere with work, social functioning and driving ability.

The National Institute on Aging notes that adults of all ages generally need the same amount of sleep, typically between seven and nine hours of rest per night. That's an important distinction, as busy adults in mid-life might feel as though they can operate on less sleep without adversely affecting their overall health. However, in addition to the problems noted by the NIH, the NIA reports that ongoing lack of sleep, or even consistently poor sleep quality, can increase risk for cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, and obesity.

Adults who feel their sleep quality is poor or those who aspire to sleep more each night can consider these three strategies to ensure a more restful night's sleep.

1. Keep devices out of the bedroom.

Screens are everywhere in modern life, and that includes the bedroom. In fact, the National Sleep Foundation's 2022 Sleep in America® Poll found that 58 percent of survey participants acknowledged looking at screens within an hour before bedtime. The NSF reports that device usage so close to bedtime can adversely affect sleep quality because the blue light emitted from screens has shorter wavelengths than other colors in the visible light spectrum, which results in more alertness than warmer tones. The blue light actually confuses the brain into thinking it's earlier in the day, thus making it harder to fall asleep.

2. Skip late afternoon naps.

Short naps can help people reenergize, but the timing of naps could adversely affect how well people sleep at night. The Mayo Clinic notes that napping after 3 p.m. can make it harder to sleep soundly at night. And while short naps can provide a nec-



Adults can consider these three strategies to ensure a more restful night's sleep.

essary jolt, it's important that naps be no longer than 30 minutes. Naps that exceed a half hour can contribute to feelings of grogginess and even compromise your ability to get restful sleep overnight.

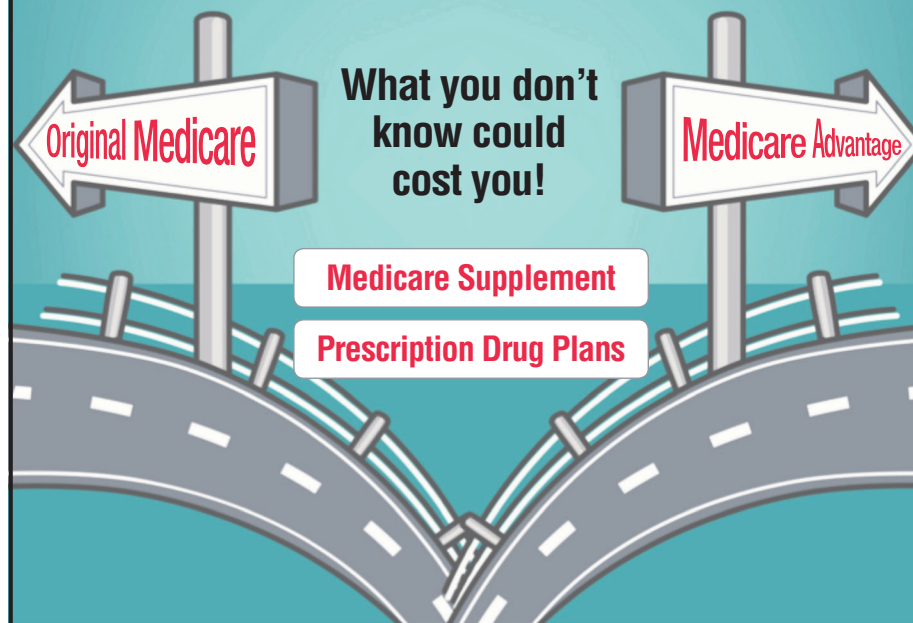
3. Avoid alcohol.

Some may consider alcohol a sleep aide, and there's good reason for that perception, even if it's misguided. Hackensack Meridian Health notes that alcohol acts as a depressant for the central nervous system that can cause brain activity to slow down. As a result, alcohol can increase feelings of relaxation and tiredness. However, that effect is not long-lasting, and as alcohol levels in the blood drop, individuals are likely to wake up and may even find it hard to fall back asleep. Waking up in the middle of the night cuts down on the time individuals spend in the most restorative stage of sleep, which is why individuals often feel as if they got little rest after a night of drinking.

Sleep is an important component of a healthy lifestyle. Some simple strategies may help adults get a more restful night's sleep.

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Surprising foods and behaviors that can derail your weight loss

Weight loss is a popular topic of conversation, particularly at the start a new year when health and fitness resolutions are on the minds of many. According to Statista, in 2023, roughly 47 percent of men and 55 percent of women in the United States indicated they had interest in losing weight. In 2022, 43 markets surveyed within YouGov Global Profiles found 52 percent of global consumers are “usually trying to lose weight.”

It has long been established that creating a calorie deficit, wherein a person consumes fewer calories than he or she needs, and regular exercise to boost metabolism to burn calories more efficiently, are effective means to losing weight. People diversify their diets in different ways to facilitate weight loss. However, they may be inadvertently foiling their plans in the process. Certain foods and behaviors billed as “diet-friendly” may be doing more harm than good. The following are some sneaky things that can knock diet and weight loss plans off track.

“Reduced fat” offerings

Check the labels before eating foods billed as “reduced fat.” Oftentimes food manufacturers will remove one or more ingredient only to substitute a laundry list of not-so-healthy ingredients to compensate for texture or flavor. This could be added sugar, salt, artificial flavorings, and more. Although calorie-for-calorie you may be able to eat a reduced-fat item and stay within your calorie goal, the price to pay may be a lot of unnecessary extras. Sometimes a smaller portion of a regular fat option is a better choice.

Salt

The Lamkin Clinic for Optimal Health says most Americans consume more than 50 percent of the daily recommended amount of salt. Having too much sodium can contribute to water retention, bloating, high blood pressure and other conditions. Turkey bacon is a good example of a “lean” and seemingly healthier option than regular pork bacon that is actually less healthy due to salt. Karen Ansel, RD, says turkey bacon has upwards of 180 milligrams of sodium per slice.

Prepared salad kits

Salad is billed as a healthy option, and people frequently chow down on greens for a low-calorie meal. However convenient they may be, ready-made salad kits may be tipping the calorie scales due to their ingredients. Kits with full-fat cheeses, salty, oil-soaked croutons, dressings containing saturated fats, and lettuces with little nutritional content may be compromising efforts to eat healthy.



Prepared salad kits with full-fat cheeses, salty, oil-soaked croutons, dressings containing saturated fats, and lettuces with little nutritional content may be compromising efforts to eat healthy.

Smoothies and juices

Juice drinks and smoothies often are touted as nutritional options and meal replacements. But people need to be careful to check the portion size and what is going into those drinks, particularly if they’re premade. Tammy Lakatos Shames, author of *The Nutrition Twins’ Veggie Cure*, says some drinks may contain between 600 and 1,000 calories. Fruit and vegetable juices also are not a replacement for fresh fruit and vegetables, which are much lower in calories than the same amount of juice.

In addition to these foods, rushing through meals, eating a meal or snack while doing something else and failing to get enough sleep can affect weight-loss plans. A consultation with a registered dietician can help individuals determine if their eating habits are adversely affecting their overall health.

What’s a good heart rate? The answer depends on age

A resting heart rate can be a good indicator of health. According to the Mayo Clinic, generally speaking, a lower heart rate at rest implies more efficient heart function and better cardiovascular fitness. Athletes tend to have lower normal resting heart rates than non-athletes. Conversely, an unusually high resting heart rate may signify an increased risk of heart disease or another medical condition, advises Harvard Health.

While the official stance on resting heart rate for adults indicates it should range from 60 to 100 beats per minute (bpm), most healthy adults fall between 55 and 85 bpm. However, certain people may fall outside of this range and still be healthy.

What qualifies as a healthy resting heart rate changes as one ages. In fact, heart rates for children are much different from adults.

- Newborn babies: 100 to 205 bpm
- Infants under 1 year: 100 to 180 bpm
- 1 to 2 years: 98 to 140 bpm
- 3 to 5 years: 80 to 120 bpm
- 6 to 7 years: 75 to 118 bpm



Healthy resting heart rates change with age

- Older children and teens: 60 to 100 bpm
- Adults: 60 to 100 bpm

Men and women differ slightly in resting heart rate. The National Institutes of Health says the average adult male heart rate is between 70 and 72 bpm, while the average for adult women is between 78 and 82 bpm. This is due in large part to the fact that men have larger hearts than women. This occurs even after accounting for age and physical fitness.

Exercise, quitting smoking and relaxing to reduce stress and anxiety can promote a low resting heart rate.

Activities to promote cardiovascular health

Resolving to be physically active is an important step towards heart health and overall well-being. Exercise is one of the most effective tools for strengthening the heart and avoiding various illnesses, including high cholesterol, that can affect cardiovascular health, according to Johns Hopkins Medicine.

Although any exercise can be beneficial, there is a fitness recipe designed to be the most effective for strengthening the heart and helping it to work to its full potential. Here are the guidelines recommended by the American Heart Association and Johns Hopkins Medicine.

- Get 150 minutes per week or more of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, or a combination of both. These activities can include running, cycling, swimming, and others that will get the heart pumping.

- Incorporate moderate- to high-intensity muscle-strengthening activity at least two days a week.

- Strength training should be designed to work the entire body. It doesn't have to be traditional weightlifting, either. Body weight exercises, yoga, Pilates, and even

tai chi can build strength and offer additional benefits like improving balance.

- Consider HIIT exercises. HIIT stands for high-intensity interval training, which involves exercising as hard as one can for a short period, and then resting briefly before exercising hard again for a short period. While there are many different HIIT programs, UT Southwestern Medical Center says a popular one involves exercising hard for four minutes, followed by three minutes of recovery time, for four cycles total.

- While stretching, flexibility and balance exercises do not directly affect heart health, they do help one stay flexible and free from joint pain and other issues that can sideline a person from exercise. Doing what one can to protect against falls and reduce risk of being sedentary will benefit the heart in the long run.

- Don't discount everyday activities in relation to how they can enhance heart health. Walking, gardening, playing with children, or tossing a ball to a family pet are beneficial aerobic activities.

Heart health is something to take seriously, and exercise plays a key role in strengthening the heart.



Exercise is an effective tool for strengthening the heart, avoiding various illnesses.

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Cholesterol: The good, the bad and the just plain confusing facts

Cholesterol can be a complicated subject that many people might admit they do not fully understand.

Most people have been taught that cholesterol is a bad thing. And for a while it was thought that dietary cholesterol, which is the cholesterol found in food, had a big impact on raising cholesterol in the blood. However, Healthline reports that more recent science indicates this is not the case for most people. Is it any wonder that cholesterol is still a mystery to so many?

What is cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a fat-like, waxy substance that occurs naturally in the body. Although widely believed to be harmful, cholesterol is actually necessary for the body to function. Healthline says the body needs it to make hormones and vitamin D, and cholesterol contributes to the membrane structure of every cell in the body.

What are lipoproteins?

When people talk about heart health and cholesterol, they're really speaking about lipoproteins and not about cholesterol itself. Lipoproteins are structures that carry cholesterol through the blood. There are two main types of lipoproteins: high-density lipoprotein (HDL) and low-density lipoprotein (LDL). HDL is typically called the "good" cholesterol, because it moves extra cholesterol from the bloodstream to the liver where it is cleaned out,



Cholesterol can be a complicated subject that many people do not fully understand.

says the Cleveland Clinic. LDL is the "bad" cholesterol because, when amounts of it are excessive, that contributes to plaque buildup in the arteries. You need some LDL to carry cholesterol to the body's cells, but having too much can be troublesome. HDL carries some LDL away from the arteries but other steps are needed to lower HDL. Another lipid in the blood includes triglyceride, which is a type of fat. High levels of triglycerides also can put a person at risk

for heart issues, including atherosclerosis, which is a hardening of the blood vessels.

Dietary cholesterol vs. blood cholesterol

The amount of cholesterol in the blood and the amount in one's diet are two different things. Typically, eating foods that contain cholesterol does not directly correspond to an elevated blood cholesterol level. Blood cholesterol is mainly deter-

mined by the amount of fats and carbohydrates in the diet, as well as genetics. Some people are simply genetically prone to high cholesterol levels. Even for people whose blood cholesterol is affected by dietary cholesterol (hyperresponders), research shows dietary cholesterol only moderately increases LDL, and in these cases it does not seem to increase their risk of heart disease, offers Healthline.

How to maintain good cholesterol health?

According to Piedmont Healthcare, there are ways to control cholesterol and lipoproteins so they are beneficial to the body.

- Choose foods lower in saturated fat and be mindful of foods that can impact blood sugar levels.
- Quit smoking
- Reduce stress levels, which may help you avoid eating high-fat foods as a coping mechanism.
- Exercise regularly
- Weight loss can both increase HDL and lower LDL
- Choose low-fat or nonfat dairy products and lean meats
- Incorporate more fiber into your diet, which will help remove excess LDL.

There is much confusion about cholesterol among the general public. But learning the basics of cholesterol can help individuals make more informed decisions about their diet and overall health.



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Social media and your child's health

Social media has become such a key component of most people's lives that it is easy to think that it as always been there. SixDegrees, created in 1997, was the first social media site similar to the format known today. When SixDegrees shut down in 2001, Friendster, LinkedIn, MySpace, and Facebook soon took root. The University of Maine reports there are now 4.8 billion social media users worldwide, representing 92.7 percent of all internet users. And according to the American Family Survey 2023, 96 percent of parents say their kids have access to at least one social media platform. Many use multiple platforms daily.

Although social media may have originated as a means to bring people together, there are many who argue that it actually does the opposite. Instances of cyberbullying, which is a form of online harassment, have grown as social media has become more pervasive. Some experts believe that mental health concerns are an unexpected side effect of increased social media use, says Johns Hopkins Medicine. In fact, in the spring of 2023, United States Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, released an advisory that suggested social



How might social media affect children's mental health?

media is harmful to young people.

How might social media affect children's mental health? Here are some of the main concerns.

- Changes in a developing brain: According to the Surgeon General's report, children's brains go through a highly sensitive period of

development between the ages of 10 and 19, when feelings of self-worth are forming. Frequent social media use may affect these feelings as children compare themselves to others they see online. In addition, functions like emotional learning, impulse control and emotional regulation may be affected.

- Development of depression: Johns Hopkins Medicine says research has demonstrated there are high rates of depression attributed to very low social media use and very high social media use. Finding a healthy balance might not be as easy as it seems.

- Addiction: There is some evidence that children become addicted to checking social media, which can lead to addiction-like behaviors in other areas. According to The Addiction Center, a Web-based substance abuse resource, addiction to social media is driven by an uncontrollable urge to log on that impairs other important areas of life. Fear of missing out (FOMO) is another threat to kids' mental health.

- Low self-esteem issues. Children and teenagers who compare themselves to others' carefully curated online profiles (which usually are not telling the whole story) can develop feelings of inadequacy and body image issues.

- Exposure to inappropriate content. Social media may introduce children to content and images that are not appropriate for their age levels and capacity to understand and interpret.



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Uncontrolled stress can take a toll

Healthy ways to cope with stress

Stressful experiences are a part of life, and the physiological responses that occur in response to these challenges are natural tools humans developed as survival mechanisms. People learn and grow as they deal with positive stressful occurrences, such as when speaking in public or taking a test. But when stressors cannot be avoided or prove chronic, the body's response to stress can take a toll on a person's mental and physical well-being.

The COVID-19 pandemic, inflation, an uptick in strong storms and subsequent weather-related disasters, and global conflicts have proven stressful for people around the world. According to a report from the American Psychological Association titled "Stress in America 2023: A Nation Recovering from Collective Trauma," the long-term stress sustained since early 2020 has had a significant impact on well-being, as evidenced by an increase in chronic illnesses. The report found people between the ages of 35 and 44 have been particularly

affected.

Long-term stress poses many health risks, including wear and tear on the immune system and an increase in worry, anxiety and irritability. Some people turn to drugs or alcohol to combat stress, but there are healthy options. The following are better ways to cope with stress.

- Reduce the number of stressors. It is not possible to remove all of the stress of life, but people can try to reduce some forms of stress. Think about sharing some responsibilities or asking for help. If a person is causing you stress, then distance yourself from this person as much as possible. Work is a major source of stress for many people. Finding a new job or cutting back on tasks could help.

- Get quality sleep. Prioritize sleeping better and longer. Fatigue can exacerbate the ability to deal with even minor stressors, leaving you more irritable and edgy. Most adults require between seven and nine hours of sleep per night, so adjust your



The body's response to stress can take a toll on a person's mental and physical well-being.

schedule to achieve this.

- Plan for daily exercise. The APA says brisk movement improves sleep and can combat stress. In one study titled "Relationships between Leisure Time Physical Activity and Perceived Stress," first published in 1996, researchers found that working adults who engaged in moderate physical activity had half the perceived stress when compared to working adults who did not participate. A 30-minute session each day can work wonders.

- Engage in pleasurable activities. It's easy to drop fun things from the schedule when stress is high. But the Cleveland Clinic advises making time for pleasurable things

as a means to combatting stress. Laughter and humor can go a long way towards reducing stressful feelings, so a night out at a comedy show or watching a funny movie can help.

- Improve your diet. Well-nourished bodies can handle stressors, illnesses and life in general much easier. Aim for a well-balanced diet that is low in processed foods and sugar.

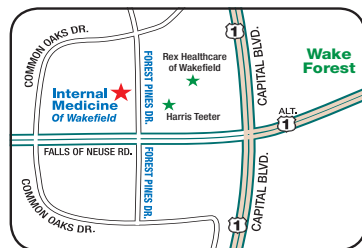
Avoid alcohol, caffeine and nicotine, as each can worsen stress in the long run, according to Sutter Health.

Stress is a natural part of life. When stress becomes too much to take, individuals can cope in various healthy ways.

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Pay attention to the link between physical activity and healthy weight

Anyone aspiring to lose weight is likely aware that there are no shortage of approaches promising to bust belly fat and slim waistlines. Weight loss fads come and go, but daily physical activity remains a reliable and effective approach to shedding extra pounds.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that physical activity provides both short- and long-term benefits. Among the more long-term benefits of regular exercise is the link between physical activity and how it facilitates an individual's ability to maintain a healthy weight. Though people may experience some notable initial weight loss after they begin a fitness regimen, they also can maintain that weight loss if they remain committed to exercise over the long haul.

The CDC notes that more physical activity increases the number of calories a body uses for energy. If individuals looking to turn over a healthier leaf couple a commitment to exercise with a healthier diet that includes consuming fewer calories, they can create a calorie deficit that ultimately contributes to weight loss.

The link between exercise and long-term weight loss is worth noting, as the CDC notes that research has found the only way to maintain weight loss is to remain engaged in regular physical activity. Individuals attempting to lose weight for a particular reason, such as an upcom-

ing wedding or a vacation, should know that exercise and a healthy diet can help them accomplish that goal. However, it's highly likely they will regain that weight if they do not continue to exercise after reaching their target weight loss goal. If the thought of regaining lost pounds is not enough to compel people to maintain their commitment to exercise, and honor all the hard work and determination required to lose the weight, perhaps a rundown of health risks associated with being overweight or obese might provide the motivation necessary to stay the course. According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, being overweight or obese increases a person's risk for a host of diseases and conditions, including:

- Type 2 diabetes
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Metabolic syndrome
- Fatty liver diseases
- Certain types of cancer, including cancers of the breast, liver, kidney, pancreas, and ovaries, among others
- Gout
- Fertility problems
- Sexual function problems
- Mental health problems

Routine physical activity is a great way to help people shed extra pounds so they can reach and maintain a healthy weight.



Weight loss fads come and go, but daily physical activity remains a reliable and effective approach to shedding extra pounds.



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