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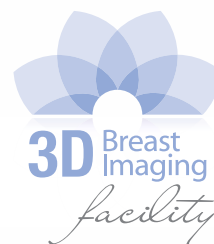
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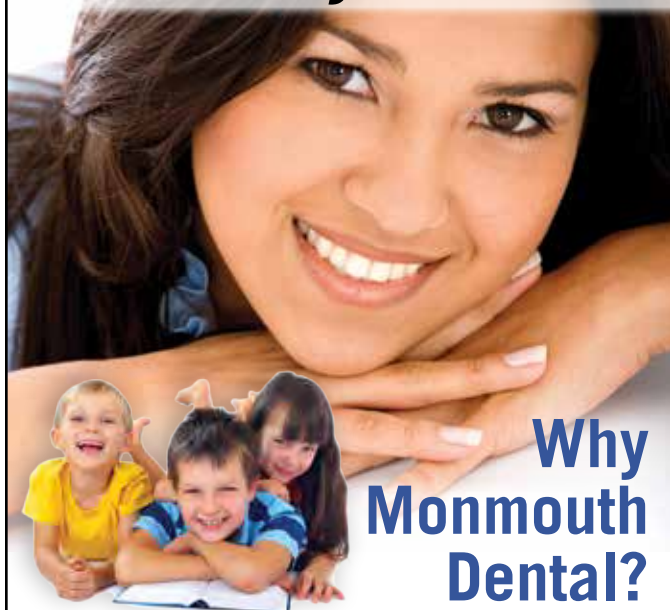
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# QUESTION:

## Juicing for Joint Pain?

I recently joined a gym as part of my 2015 New Year's resolution to get back in shape, but when I work out my joints hurt to the point where it is affecting the quality of my workouts. My doctor told me I have arthritis; rather than just quit, is there anything I can do to help ease the pain naturally?

**C**ongratulations on taking action to achieve your fitness goals this year! Arthritis is a category for over 100 different disorders that affect the joints of the body, many of which involve an increase of inflammation. Most people don't realize how much improving your nutrition can improve the way you feel. By adding a simple juice filled with anti-inflammatory ingredients to your daily regimen you may be able to ward off pain, to allow you get the most out of your exercise program and achieve your goals for 2015. ■

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## Joint Juice Recipe:

- 1 bunch of organic celery
- 1 English cucumber, peeled if not organic
- 1 inch piece of ginger root
- 1.5 inches of turmeric root (or three smaller root sections)
- 3 organic carrots
- 2 cups of freshly chopped pineapple

Wash, cut and combine all the ingredients in a blender. Blend, sip, enjoy!

### Some foods to include when fighting off arthritis:

- |               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| • Celery      | • Pear     |
| • Ginger Root | • Spinach  |
| • Turmeric    | • Cucumber |
| • Parsley     | • Tomato   |

*Never start any diet or exercise program without proper evaluation by your doctor, chiropractor or physical therapist first. You should also be checked for any joint misalignments, muscle imbalances or mobility issues that could hinder your progress or set you up for future injury while exercising.*



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## February Is American Heart Month

By Susan Heckler

**O**ne of the highlights each February is the anticipation of Valentine's Day. This is the occasion where you can touch someone's heart and bring them happiness. February is also American Heart Month, which promotes understanding of your risks for heart disease, stroke, and to stay "heart healthy" for yourself and the ones you love.

Cardiovascular disease is the #1 killer of women and men in the United States. One in four deaths is caused by heart disease annually. It is a leading cause of disability, preventing Americans from working and enjoying family activities as well as costing the United States over \$300 billion each year. This includes the cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity caused by heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure.

### Do you know your risk factors?

- **Diet**—Make healthy choices, reduce sodium and portion control.
- **Physical Activity**—The Surgeon General recommends that adults should engage in moderate-intensity activity for at least 150 minutes per week.



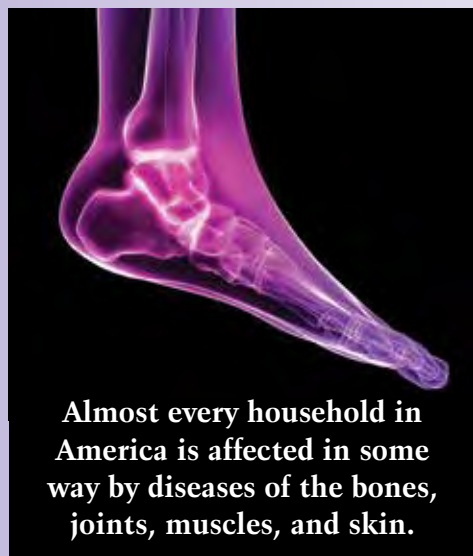
- **Tobacco Use**—STOP SMOKING!
- **Obesity**—Being overweight increases your risk.
- **High Blood Pressure**—High blood pressure often has no symptoms, so be sure to have it checked on a regular basis. Avoid drinking too much alcohol, which can increase your blood pressure.
- **High Blood Cholesterol**—Test your cholesterol levels at least once every 5 years, although annually is best.
- **Diabetes**—Monitor your blood sugar levels closely
- **Stress**—Take steps to manage and reduce it!

So when you see stores decorated with hearts, remember to have your own heart checked and remind the ones you love too. ■

# Understanding Gout

**"A**lmost every household in America is affected in some way by diseases of the bones, joints, muscles, and skin," says Dr. Stephen I. Katz, director of National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS). These disorders affect people of all ages, racial and ethnic populations, and economic levels.

Gout is a form of arthritis that causes joint pain. It happens when uric acid, a bodily waste, deposits as needle-like crystals in your joints. The crystals cause swelling, redness, heat, pain, and stiffness.



**Almost every household in America is affected in some way by diseases of the bones, joints, muscles, and skin.**

In many people, gout first affects the joints of the big toe (a condition called podagra). Other spots can include the insteps, ankles, heels, knees, wrists, fingers, and elbows. Chalky uric acid deposits, called tophi, can also appear as lumps under the skin surrounding the joints and rims of the ear and also can cause kidney stones.

To find out more visit [www.Medlineplus.gov](http://www.Medlineplus.gov). Type in "gout" in the search box. Also, consult your physician to answer your questions and to get a proper examination. ■

## What Are the Four Stages of Gout?

- **Asymptomatic (without symptoms) hyperuricemia**—Elevated levels of uric acid in the blood (called hyperuricemia) but no other symptoms. This does not need treatment.
- **Acute gouty arthritis**—Uric acid crystals build up in joints, causing sudden, intense pain, swelling and sometimes warmth and tenderness. Attacks are common at night and can be triggered by stress, alcohol or drugs, or the presence of another illness. Eating too many high-purine foods, such as liver, dried peas and beans, gravies and anchovies can produce uric acid crystals and increase the risk of gout. Even without treatment, such flare-ups (or bouts) usually subside within 10 days. They may not happen again for months or even years. But over time they may last longer and occur more frequently.
- **Interval or inter-critical gout**—The period between acute attacks, with no symptoms.
- **Chronic gout**—The most disabling stage. It usually develops over a period of 10 years. The affected joints and sometimes the kidneys may have been permanently damaged. With proper treatment, most people do not progress to this stage.

# What Is a Coma?

By Susan Heckler

**A** coma is a sustained state of unconsciousness. While in a coma, the patient does not respond to his or her environment. While the person looks like he or she is sleeping, the person cannot be awakened by any stimulation, including noise and pain.

Comas are caused by an injury to the brain. Over 50 percent of comas are related to head trauma or disturbances in the brain's circulatory system. These injuries can be due to oxygen deprivation, increased pressure, bleeding, swelling, high blood sugar levels, stroke, or the buildup of toxins or infection. Some brain injuries are temporary and others may be permanent.

**If you see someone who fits the description of a coma, the sooner they receive medical attention the better.**

To determine the treatment for a coma, you must know the cause. The sooner the person gets medical attention, the better the treatment result. The longer the cause persists, the better the chance for permanent damage. The prognosis varies greatly depending on the cause, the severity of damage, and the health of the person.

There are several types of comas:

- Toxic-metabolic encephalopathy is an acute condition of brain dysfunction with symptoms of confusion and/or delirium,

which is usually reversible. The causes of toxic-metabolic encephalopathy vary.

- Anoxic brain injury is a condition of the brain, which is caused by total lack of oxygen. Lack of oxygen, even for a few minutes, causes cell death to brain tissues.
- Persistent vegetative state is severe unconsciousness where the person is not aware of his or her environs and not capable of voluntary movement.
- There is breathing, circulation, and sleep-wake cycles and may progress to wakefulness but with no higher brain function.
- Locked-in syndrome is a rare neurological condition where a person is totally paralyzed except for the eye muscles. They remains awake and alert and with a normal mind.
- Brain death is an irreversible termination of all brain function resulting from any lasting or widespread injury to the brain.
- Medically induced coma is used to protect the brain from swelling after an injury on a temporary basis. The patient receives a controlled dose of an anesthetic in a hospital intensive care unit, which causes lack of feeling or awareness. This type of coma is used to protect the brain from swelling by reducing the metabolic rate of brain tissue, as well as the cerebral blood flow.

If you see someone who fits the description of a coma, the sooner they receive medical attention the better. ■

# QUESTION:

Dr. Rafah Salloum, MD



Yale University School of Medicine.  
University of Chicago Pritzker  
School of Medicine, Damascus  
University School of Medicine.

## When should I see a Rheumatologist “Arthritis Doctor”?

Over 52 million adults in the U.S. have some form of arthritis including rheumatoid arthritis, gout, fibromyalgia, and osteoarthritis.

A Rheumatologist is an internal medicine physician with many extra years of training and experience in nonsurgical forms of arthritis, diseases of the muscle, joints and bones, in addition to autoimmune disorders. It is best to be seen by a rheumatologist early after you experience symptoms of joint pain, swelling in a joint or suspect that you may have arthritis. This way the rheumatologist can do an extensive work up to detect early arthritis and treat you in timely fashion to prevent irreversible joint damage.



Common signs and symptoms of arthritis include joint pain, joint swelling, stiffness around a joint, recurrent pain and tenderness of a joint, difficulty using or moving a joint, and warmth or redness in a joint.

### Rheumatologic disorders include:

|                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Neck and Back Pain   | Muscle Pain             |
| Knee & Hip Pain      | Polymyalgia Rheumatica  |
| Rheumatoid Arthritis | Tendonitis and Bursitis |
| Gout                 | Psoriatic Arthritis     |
| Osteoporosis         | Vasculitis              |
| Osteoarthritis       | Raynaud's Phenomenon    |
| Fibromyalgia         | Lupus                   |
| Lyme Disease         |                         |

*If you have received a diagnosis of the above, or one is suspected, contact Monmouth Arthritis & Osteoporosis*

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## Everything You Need to Know about Vitamin D Deficiencies

By Brianna Siciliano

There are so many vitamins in the world, and sometimes we have absolutely no clue which vitamins are vital for daily health. Because of this, we become deficient of certain vitamins, weakening our body in one way or another (for example, weakening our immune system, organs, bones, blood flow, etc). It is time we take control of our health and make sure that our bodies are fed with the vitamins and minerals that can improve our lives today, tomorrow, and everyday for the rest of our lives!

Vitamin D is essential for supporting muscle strength, supporting a healthy immune system, regulating mineral concentrations of phosphorus and calcium in the body, and enhancing calcium absorption. Deficiencies of vitamin D are (unfortunately) very common in the U.S. These deficiencies can be caused by being overweight or obese, living in a region with a long winter season, having little to no sun exposure (it is recommended to have at least—or more than—10-30 minutes of sun exposure at least twice a week), failing to consume the recommended levels of vitamin D over time, having darker skin (because people with darker skin may need as much as 10 times more sun exposure than paler people so that the production of vitamin D can be the same), or being older (because as we age, our skin does not make as much vitamin D in response to our body's sun exposure).

Symptoms of vitamin D deficiencies include muscle weakness,

bone pain, increased blood pressure, and depression. In addition, vitamin D deficiencies can be linked to serious health concerns, including severe asthma in children, increased risk of death from cardiovascular disease, cancer, and cognitive impairment in older adults.

Can you be vitamin D deficient and not know it? Yes, it is possible! To find out if you are vitamin D deficient, it might be worth your while to take a blood test (specifically the 25-hydroxy vitamin D blood test) and look at your results (have your doctor do so as well!). If your levels come back somewhere in the range of 20 nanograms/milliliter to 50ng/mL, you do not have a vitamin D deficiency. However, if your levels are less than 12 ng/mL, you are vitamin D deficient.

Eating foods like cooked salmon, fortified milk, fortified cereal, and eggs—all food sources containing different amounts of vitamin D—is not going to expose your body to its daily vitamin D needs. To give your body more vitamin D, you can either A) expose your bare skin to the sun more often or B) take vitamin D supplements. Hey, it doesn't hurt to do both! ■





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## Dr. Benitez uses the Apollo System for the first time in New Jersey



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The Apollo™ System, manufactured by California-based Penumbra, Inc., was used for the first time in New Jersey and the outcome was a success.

Apollo is an innovative new surgical tool that enables minimally invasive removal of deeply seated, blood clots in the brain during a single, efficient operation. With combined use of endoscope and image guidance, the Apollo System allows decompression and removal of otherwise inoperable clots deep in the brain, among other uses.

Dr. Ron Benitez, a nationally renowned neurosurgeon and president of Atlantic NeuroSurgical Specialists (ANS), successfully treated the first patient in New Jersey using the Apollo device. Dr. Benitez explains: "Our first patient was a 63-year-old male who suffered from hypertension and was at risk for time-sensitive, irreversible damage to the brain due to pressure and clot formation. For this patient, I was concerned his need was more urgent, and that the Apollo System would facilitate the same surgical result in minutes, rather than days utilizing medical managements that we did in the past that could result in brain damage or even death."

"Following successful clot removal with the Apollo System, our patient improved and we were able to remove brain pressure monitors and breathing support over the next few days. As opposed to facing several weeks comatose in the intensive care unit, our patient was awake and moved from the unit within a few days. I am grateful that we are finally making progress in an all too frequent and extremely incapacitating and fatal condition. I think the arrival of the Apollo System is very timely. I'm confident that use of the Apollo System will result in faster patient recovery and a shortened stay in the intensive care unit," Dr. Benitez concluded.

For more information about ANS visit [www.ansdocs.com](http://www.ansdocs.com) or call 732-455-8225. ■

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-Linda A.

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## Staying Healthy in the Winter

By Brianna Siciliano

Winter weather can tire us out; waking up in the morning to frigid temperatures and the dark sky is not exactly the ideal setting to wake up in. Putting mornings aside, winter brings many undesirable factors into play, including colds and the flu, extra weight on our bodies, and unimaginable exhaustion. Thankfully we can do our best to keep healthy this winter season by taking all the right steps to protect ourselves and our loved ones.

To start, it is very important to get as much sleep as possible throughout the winter months. In the winter, it is perfectly natural for our bodies to catch up on hours for sleeping. Nights are longer for these short winter months, therefore we must take advantage of this blessing!

Another important factor to staying healthy in the winter is exercise. As the holidays come to an end, we are afraid to step on our scales and see how much weight we have gained over the past few weeks. But weight control is not the only reason to exercise in the winter! Working out gives our body energy and endorphins while getting our heartbeat up, and working out makes our bodies warm. There is no better way to stay warm in the winter than by taking

advantage of all the benefits that exercising provides us!

Feeding your body supplements in the winter is a great way to prevent colds. Including Vitamin C, Vitamin A, Iron, and Vitamin D in your diet is a great way to strengthen your immune system, boost energy levels, maintain great eyesight, and reduce the time frame and severity of cold symptoms. What many people do not realize the importance taking vitamins. While Vitamin C is an antioxidant that protects our bodies from diseases, such as heart disease and cancer. Vitamin A is vital for strengthening the immune system, maintaining eyesight, and repairing tissues in our body

to help growth and development. While Iron is needed for energy and the formation of red blood cells in our body (which carry oxygen); vitamin D is needed to control the amount of calcium in our bodies to keep our bones strong.

All in all, staying healthy this winter season is possible! Getting more sleep, exercising, and taking vitamins and minerals can help your health remain in tip-top shape during the cold and flu season. ■



*Animals hibernate in the winter, so why can't we? Sleeping is vital to keeping healthy during the winter months!*





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## Early Warning Signs of a Learning Disability in Young Children

By Lance Halpern, Ed.S., LPC.

During the early years of a child's education starting with preschool, children learn at different rates and with different styles. But if your child has significant trouble with numbers, letters, or speech, they may have a learning disability. Learning disabilities are a category of disorders that affect how the brain processes information, making it difficult to grasp some concepts. A child with a learning disability may understand a story perfectly when it is read to them, but will struggle to answer questions about it afterward. Another child might easily recite the alphabet from A to Z, but be unable to name individual letters when they are pointed out. Still another child may have a hard time putting together puzzles, tying her shoes, or buttoning a sweater.

Children with learning disabilities usually have normal or above normal intelligence, but they have trouble expressing their knowledge. Because it is so difficult for children with learning disabilities to master certain tasks, they often experience frustration, anger, low self-esteem, and even depression. Your child may know just what they want to accomplish, to say or write or do, but getting there isn't a straight path.

Red flags that could indicate a learning disability in young children include:

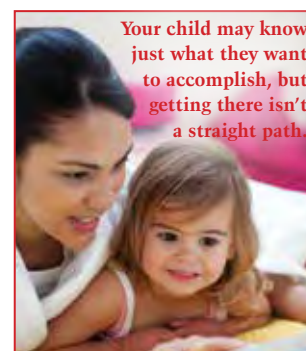
- Delayed speech
- Pronunciation problems
- Difficulty learning new words
- Difficulty learning to read
- Trouble learning numbers/the alphabet
- Short attention span
- Difficulty following directions
- Poor grasp of a crayon or pen

Diagnosing learning disabilities is controversial. Some experts believe they are over diagnosed, a handy catchall for a host of normal differences in learning styles. Diagnosing learning disabilities in preschoolers and very young children is particularly controversial because they learn

at such vastly different rates. That doesn't mean you should ignore any concerns you have now. Careful diagnosis is important and early intervention can make a big difference in your child's academic future.

If you are worried about your child's competence with reading, writing, numbers, or speech, talk about it with people who are familiar with your child, such as your child's teacher. Teachers are usually adept at spotting the early warning signs of a learning disability. If your child's teacher hasn't already raised the issue with you, don't hesitate to bring up your concerns. The signs of a learning disability can be already strong at a young age and the advice to "wait and see" if your child is just suffering from a momentary setback, and will catch up in no time is truly inappropriate without the concern being formally evaluated and substantiated by a psychologist who is experienced in education matters and has documented familiarity within the school culture.

Learning disabilities are permanent and don't go away, but much can be done to help your child compensate for the disability and learn to work around the problem when identified as soon as possible. As a parent, one of the most important things you can do is support your child and assist with positive learning experiences. Don't try to be an expert on treating learning disabilities yourself. Your job is to provide encouragement, love, and patience and to seek out psychological experts who have the skills to help your child learn. ■





## QUESTION:

### What's the best way to treat knee arthritis? Consider a non-surgical treatment that really works!

**O**steoarthritis of the knee is the #1 leading cause of disability in the U.S. Over 27 million people suffer with knee arthritis and that number continues to grow. With knee arthritis, the cartilage breaks down and wears away, leaving the bones to rub together causing pain swelling stiffness and limited range of motion. As the cartilage breaks down, the knee loses its lubricating fluid. We found that by replacing this lubricating fluid with a natural substance called Hyalgan, the lubrication is restored and many patients experience amazing pain relief.



#### DOES IT HURT?

Many of our patients report that they feel little to no pain at all! We do everything possible to minimize any pain from the procedure, from pain relieving spray and a local anesthetic, to precision guidance that ensures we are always in the right spot.

#### WILL MY INSURANCE COVER HYALGAN?

This procedure is covered by most major insurance companies including Medicare. Our insurance department pre-verifies every patient.

#### WHO WILL BE PERFORMING THE HYALGAN PROCEDURE?

Dr. Scot Paris is the medical physician who performs the Hyalgan injection. Dr. Paris is trained as a general surgeon and has extensive experience with a variety of surgical procedures. With his conservative approach, he has excelled in the non-surgical treatment of knee pain with the use of fluoroscopy guided Hyalgan injections.

#### SO HOW DO I KNOW IF YOUR KNEE PAIN TREATMENT PROGRAM WILL HELP ME?

If you are tired of suffering with painful arthritis of the knee, and you want to see if the latest advances in non-surgical treatment can help, all you have to do is call 732-683-1800 to set up a risk free consultation. During the consultation all of your questions will be answered in a warm and friendly environment. Knee replacement surgery is a very extreme measure to take without considering all of your other options first. Once it's done there is no turning back. For that reason we encourage you to schedule an appointment to see if you are a candidate for Hyalgan treatment.

We are proud to offer our patients a comprehensive knee pain treatment program that includes the best non-surgical methods to relieve pain all under one roof. We look forward to having the opportunity to help you feel better. Take the first step in ending your knee pain and call to schedule an appointment today!



Dr. Scot Paris using precision fluoroscopy guidance to ensure the best results possible.



#### WHAT IS HYALGAN AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Hyalgan is a natural lubricating fluid that acts as a lubricant and shock absorber inside the knee joint. The substance in Hyalgan is hyaluronic acid which is normally found in high levels in healthy joints. Replacing the hyaluronic acid with Hyalgan lubricates the joint and reduces pain. Hyalgan has been administered over 40 million times and has been proven to provide long-lasting relief of knee pain from osteoarthritis.

#### WHAT IF YOU ALREADY TRIED KNEE INJECTIONS?

If you have had injections like this in the past and experienced poor results, there is still hope! Many doctors in this area offer similar injections, but very few use precision fluoroscopy guidance. Fluoroscopy guidance ensures that the pain relieving Hyalgan reaches the knee capsule where it bonds with the joint fluid to create a lubricating and cushioning layer. Without fluoroscopy, it is estimated that doctors "miss" the capsule over 30% of the time resulting in poor results. We want each and every one of our patients to have the greatest chance of success, so every injection is done with precision fluoroscopy guidance to ensure that the Hyalgan gets into the capsule 100% of the time. Because of this, patients who previously felt little to no relief with non-fluoroscopy guided injection are now getting excellent results.

The other "big difference" in our results is the multitude of other supportive care options that we have available to enhance the effectiveness of the Hyalgan procedure. These options include state of the art medical laser treatment, physical therapy, manipulation, corrective osteoarthritis bracing (takes pressure off the damaged section of the knee), and natural anti-inflammatory products. The combination of these treatments offers you what we feel is the most comprehensive non-surgical knee treatment program available.

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# Guillain-Barre Syndrome

By Susan Heckler

If you are experiencing weakness and tingling in your extremities, this may be the first symptoms of Guillain-Barre Syndrome. This is a rare condition in which your body's immune system attacks your nerves. The syndrome is named after the French physicians Georges Guillain and Jean Alexandre Barré, who described it in 1916.

The exact cause of Guillain-Barre syndrome is unknown. The disease may be triggered by an infection such as a respiratory infection or the stomach flu. The sensations may spread quickly, even leading to whole body paralysis. The diagnosis is usually made by nerve conduction studies and with studies of the cerebrospinal fluid. Treatment requires hospitalization.

There's no known cure, but several treatments can ease symptoms and reduce the duration of the illness. Most people recover from Guillain-Barre syndrome, though some will still have effects from it, such as weakness, numbness or fatigue.

Signs and symptoms of Guillain-Barre syndrome may include:

- Prickling, "pins and needles" sensations in your fingers, toes, ankles or wrists
- Weakness in your legs that spreads to your upper body
- Unsteady walking or inability to walk or climb stairs
- Difficulty with eye or facial movements, including speaking, chewing or swallowing

- Severe pain that may feel achy or cramp-like and may be worse at night
- Difficulty with bladder control or bowel function
- Rapid heart rate
- Low or high blood pressure
- Difficulty breathing

People with Guillain-Barre syndrome usually experience their most significant weakness within two to four weeks after symptoms begin. Recovery usually begins two to four weeks after weakness plateaus. In about 10 percent of people with the disorder, symptoms begin in the arms or face.

The main types of the syndrome are:

- Acute inflammatory demyelinating polyradiculoneuropathy (AIDP), the most common form in the U.S.
- Miller Fisher syndrome (MFS), in which paralysis starts in the eyes.
- Acute motor axonal neuropathy (AMAN) and acute motor-sensory axonal neuropathy (AMSAN), which is less common in the U.S. but more frequent in China, Japan and Mexico.

Seek medical help if you have mild tingling in your toes or fingers. There are other possible explanations, but a diagnosis is imperative. ■

# Urinary Tract Infections

By Susan Heckler

Urinary tract infections can happen at any age. The urinary tract, specifically, is the system in your body that makes urine and carries it out of your body. This includes the bladder and kidneys as well as the tubes that connect them.

When a germ enters your urinary tract, it can cause infection. The most common would be the bladder, but, if left untreated, this can spread to your kidneys. A kidney infection is more serious as it can lead to permanent damage. Typically, germs get into your system through the tube that carries urine from your bladder to the outside of your body, your urethra. Women have shorter urethras and are more prone to infection than men. A simple urine analysis will make the diagnosis.

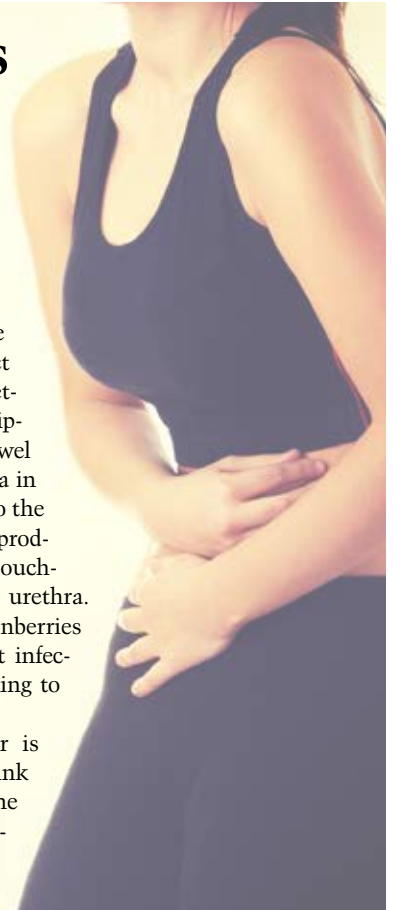
Some signs and symptoms that you may have a UTI would be:

- A persistent urge to urinate
- A burning sensation when urinating
- Passing frequent, small amounts of urine
- Urine that appears cloudy, red, bright pink or cola-colored which could be a sign of blood in the urine
- Strong-smelling urine
- Pelvic pain, in women
- Rectal pain, in men

A kidney infection could present with upper back and side pain, high fever, shaking/chills, nausea and vomiting.

To reduce your risk of urinary tract infections, drink plenty of liquids, especially water. This helps dilute your urine, ensuring that you'll urinate more frequently. Frequent urination allows bacteria to be flushed from your urinary tract before an infection can begin. Better bathroom habits such as wiping from front to back after a bowel movement helps prevent bacteria in the anal region from spreading to the vagina and urethra. Feminine products such as deodorant sprays, douches and powders can irritate the urethra. Researchers believe that cranberries contain substances that prevent infection-causing bacteria from sticking to the urinary tract walls.

When in doubt, your doctor is only a phone call away. If you think you may have an infection, the sooner it is diagnosed and treated, the easier it is to shake. ■



## QUESTION:

**I have had headaches along with dry eyes and other problems, but my vision is 20/20. What could be wrong?**

## ANSWER:

If you spend a lot of time using a computer or similar screens, you could have Computer Vision Syndrome. Prolonged computer use could result in eye discomfort and vision problems. Watching a computer screen often makes the eyes work harder. Looking at a computer screen is unlike reading a printed page. In general, the letters on the computer screen are not as precise or sharply defined, the level of contrast of the letters to the background is reduced, and the presence of glare and reflections on the screen may make viewing difficult. The level of discomfort is directly related to the amount of computer use. The most common symptoms associated with (CVS) are eyestrain, headaches, blurry vision, dry eyes and even neck and shoulder pain. Possible causes are poor lighting, glare on the computer screen, improper viewing distances, poor seating posture, uncorrected vision problems or any combination of these factors. According to WebMD, "Somewhere between 50% and 90% of people who work at a computer screen have at least some symptoms of eye trouble." Children are vulnerable to computer vision syndrome because they stare at portable video games or who use computers throughout the day at school. Working

at a computer necessitates that the eyes constantly focus, move back and forth, and align with what you are seeing. You may have to look down at papers and then shift back up to type. The eyes have to accommodate to changing images on the screen in order to create a clear picture for the brain to interpret. Uncorrected vision problems like farsightedness, astigmatism, inadequate eye focusing or eye coordination abilities, and aging changes of the eyes can all contribute to the development of visual symptoms when using a computer. Some of the symptoms may be temporary and will diminish with decreased computer use. Not everyone has the option of reducing their time on the screens. To determine whether or not you have a long-lasting visual problem, see your eye care physician. To learn more about what you can do to protect the health of your eyes and your vision, visit the office of Dr. Steven Linker at Monmouth Vision Associates for an exam to discuss your eye care health and the same for your family. They take most medical insurances and have a wonderful selection of frames should you need glasses. A visit to them may be your first line of ocular defense! Check out their website for more information <http://monmouthvision.com/> Dr. Steven Linker, OD Monmouth Vision Associates, 50 Route 9 North Suite 206, Morganville, NJ, 07751 • Tel: 732-617-1717. ■



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# QUESTION:

## Flu season is here. How can you prevent the flu and treat its symptoms?

Stan Hish, R.Ph.  
Pharmacist and Owner



**A**lthough the exact timing and duration of influenza (flu) outbreaks vary from year to year, most flu activity peaks between December and February, but can last until as late as May. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), flu activity continues to increase, and 36 states, including New Jersey, have reported widespread activity.

### **What is the flu?**

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. The flu can be mild or severe and may result in serious complications and even hospitalization and death. Young children, pregnant women, adults 65 years of age and older, and people with certain health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, or heart and lung disease, are at high risk of serious flu complications.

Flu symptoms include cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. High fever is common, but respiratory symptoms can sometimes be present without a fever.

### **Prevention: The flu vaccine is the first line of defense.**

An annual flu vaccine is recommended for everyone six months of age and older. At Marlboro Village Pharmacy, we have a small reserve of flu vaccines available, and it is not too late to shield yourself and your family from the flu this season. All our vaccines are preservative free, and egg-free vaccines are available upon request.

### **Traditional medicine: Antiviral drugs**

It is extremely important to see a doctor as soon as you develop flu symptoms. A physician can perform a rapid influenza test and prescribe an antiviral medication, such as Tamiflu or Relenza, if necessary. Antiviral medications can reduce symptoms, shorten the duration of illness, and help avoid hospitalization; however, these drugs are most effective when taken within 48 hours after the onset of symptoms.

During influenza outbreaks, these medications are often in short supply. At Marlboro Village Pharmacy, we maintain a sufficient supply of these medications and have the capacity and expertise to compound Tamiflu into liquid or suppositories.

### **Alternative medicine: Homeopathic and herbal remedies**

We are firm advocates of homeopathy due to its natural origin, efficacy, and safety. Homeopathic and herbal remedies can be used in conjunction with or as an alternative to traditional medications. Boiron Oscilloccoccinum, Hyland's Complete Flu Care, and Sambucol have been shown in clinical studies to shorten the duration and decrease the intensity of flu symptoms. These homeopathic medicines are effective and free of any side effects, and can be used for adults and children. At Marlboro Village Pharmacy, we offer these products as well as homeopathic and herbal remedies for a multitude of other acute health conditions. ■

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# QUESTION:

## How can a dentist help with my snoring?

**S**nororing may be common but it is not normal. Snoring can be a red flag for sleep apnea. It is one of the symptoms, along with shortness of breath, that arouses you from sleep, sporadic pauses in your breath during sleep, and disproportionate daytime drowsiness. If you have any of these signs, you need to determine why.

Left untreated, sleep apnea can increase the risk of high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, obesity, diabetes, heart failure, and arrhythmias; as well as increase work-related or driving accidents.

I have been practicing orthodontics for adults and youth for 20 years in Monmouth County, currently in Colts Neck at the Colts Neck Center for Orthodontics and Invisalign. My involvement with sleep apnea is a personal one. My incessant snoring was an issue with my wife, so I had a sleep study done and found out that I had severe sleep apnea. I tried the standard CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) mask, only to find it annoying and difficult to sleep with. I tried numerous devices and dental appliances, but they were all uncomfortable and ineffective.

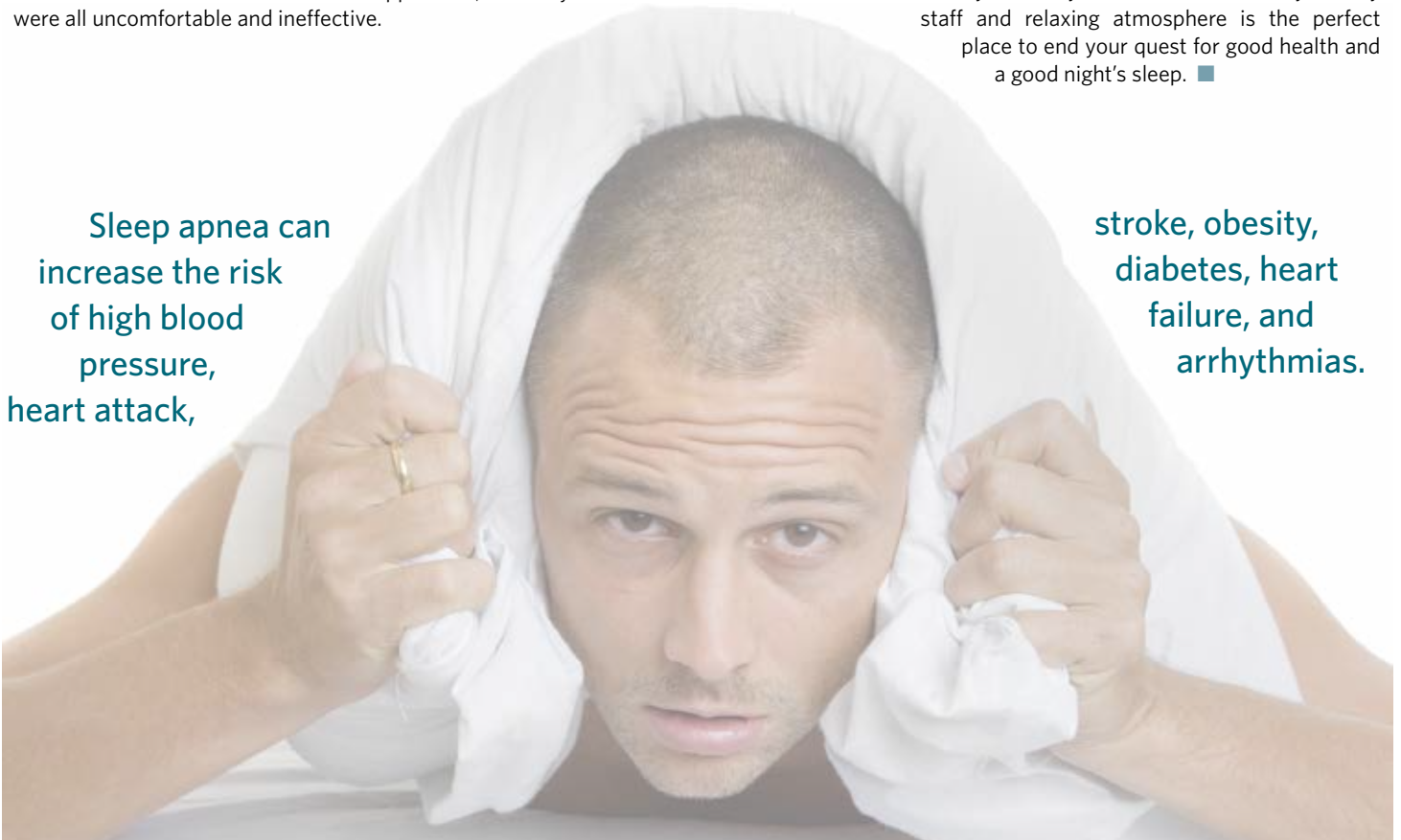
While working with doctors from Stanford University Medical Center, I was introduced to, and now personally wear, the first dental appliance for snoring, Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA), and Upper Airway Resistance Syndrome (UARS). It is a perfect alternative for those who cannot tolerate their CPAP therapy. This appliance is FDA approved as a medical device in two separate classifications; (1) as a mandibular repositioner for treatment of snoring and sleep apnea, and (2) as a nasal dilator for improved ease of breathing. Medical insurance will pay for this device.

I have brought my many years of dental expertise, personal experience, and research into the Chase Dental Sleep Care of Central New Jersey to assist others in determining the cause of their snoring and the best treatment for it. It has impacted my own life in such a positive way; I hope to share the experience with you.

Give us a call and let us help you with your sleep and snoring issues as well as all of your family's orthodontic needs. My friendly staff and relaxing atmosphere is the perfect place to end your quest for good health and a good night's sleep. ■

Sleep apnea can increase the risk of high blood pressure, heart attack,

stroke, obesity, diabetes, heart failure, and arrhythmias.



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# What Are Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAIs)?

By Krusha Vaidya

Healthcare-associated infections, or HAIs, are infections that people acquire while they are receiving treatment for another condition in a healthcare setting. HAIs can be acquired anywhere healthcare is delivered, including inpatient acute care hospitals, outpatient settings such as ambulatory surgical centers and end-stage renal disease facilities, and long-term care facilities such as nursing homes and rehabilitation centers. HAIs may be caused by any infectious agent, including bacteria, fungi, and viruses, as well as other less common types of pathogens.



These infections are associated with a variety of risk factors, including:

- Use of indwelling medical devices such as bloodstream, endotracheal, and urinary catheters
- Surgical procedures
- Injections
- Contamination of the healthcare environment
- Transmission of communicable diseases between patients and healthcare workers
- Overuse or improper use of antibiotics

## Magnitude of the Problem

HAIs are a significant cause of morbidity and mortality. At any given time, about 1 in every 25 inpatients has an infection related to hospital care. These infections cost the U.S. healthcare system billions of dollars each year and lead to the loss of tens of thousands of lives. In addition, HAIs can have devastating emotional, financial and medical consequences.

A majority of hospital-acquired HAIs include:

- Urinary tract infections
- Surgical site infections
- Bloodstream infections
- Pneumonia

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has identified the reduction of HAIs as an Agency Priority Goal for the Department and is committed to reducing the national rate of HAIs by demonstrating significant, quantitative, and measurable reductions in hospital-acquired central line-associated bloodstream infections and catheter-associated urinary tract infections.

Please visit [www.health.gov/hai/prevent\\_hai.asp](http://www.health.gov/hai/prevent_hai.asp) for more information on HAI specific goals, including the progress made to date. ■





# QUESTION:

## Why Is Thermography Considered the Best Breast Test?

**S**tudies show that a thermogram identifies precancerous or cancerous cells earlier than mammograms, and produces unambiguous results, which cuts down on additional testing—and it doesn't hurt the body. Thermography's accuracy and reliability is remarkable too according to the American Journal of Surgery and the American Society of Breast Surgeons, Cornell.

Thermography can be used as a whole body approach to wellness with the understanding that there is no "normal" asymmetrical heat in the body. Thermal cameras can detect heat on the skin surface that may show underlying pathologies. Heat is an indication that inflammation exists, and typically inflammation is present in precancerous and cancerous cells, too. (It's also present in torn muscles and ligaments as well as arthritic joints, which thermography can also detect.)

Breast Thermography is a radiation-free state-of-the-art screening procedure that captures heat images of the breast to aid in the early detection of breast cancer. As a tumor grows it develops a blood supply that emits heat that is detected on a modern infrared device. Thermography can establish overall breast health and is an excellent test for assessing fibrocystic breasts and response to treatment. Thermography also can detect many other ailments such as Systematic Dental Disease.

Some dentists have long claimed a relationship between oral bacteria and breast cancer. With Thermography imaging, we can see how the bacteria spreads through the lymphatic (immune) system.

### OVERALL RESEARCH

The Index Medicus, a comprehensive index of medical scientific journal articles, references more than 800 per-reviewed breast thermography studies, in which over 250,000 women participated. Many of these studies involved very large groups of patients (from 37,000 to over 100,000) and some have followed patients for as much as 12 years. Among other conclusions, these studies found that when thermography has been added to a woman's regular breast health checkups, a 61% increased survival rate was realized, and when used as part of a multi-model approach (clinical examination, mammography and thermography) 95% of early stage cancers will be detected. It is well known that early detection is the best defense against breast cancer and that, if treated in the earliest stages, a 95% cure rate is achieved. The "cure" is early detection. ■

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to view our video tour.



# Postpartum Depression & Fathers

The symptoms of postpartum depression in fathers are similar to symptoms for postpartum depression in women. They include signs of depression such as loss of interests, weight gain or loss but also include:

- Trouble sleeping when your baby sleeps (more than the lack of sleep new moms usually get).
- Feeling numb or disconnected from your baby.
- Having scary or negative thoughts about the baby, like thinking someone will take your baby away or hurt your baby.
- Worrying that you will hurt the baby.
- Feeling guilty about not being a good parent, or ashamed that you cannot care for your baby.
- According to the CDC and [www.Health.gov](http://www.Health.gov) approximately, 4% of fathers experience depression in the first year of their child's life.
- By a child's 12th birthday, 21% of fathers will have experienced one or more episodes of depression.
- Younger fathers, those with a history of depression, and those of lower education and income were most likely to experience depression.

If you notice any of these symptoms in a loved one who just became a parent, consult your doctor or a professional for advice on how to get them help. ■

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## QUESTION:

**I have a big bump on the joint under my big toe that is very painful. What is it?**

**I**t sounds like you have a bunion. The affected joint is the metatarsophalangeal joint (MTPJ). A bunion is caused when the bone or tissue at the joint moves out of place for some reason. This forces the toe to bend toward the other toes, producing a painful

lump of bone on the foot. Because the MTPJ carries a lot of the body's weight, bunions can cause extreme pain if left untreated.

This is a symptom of faulty foot development and is usually caused by the way we walk, our inherited foot type, or our shoes. It tends to run in families; you may have inherited your feet from someone prone to bunions. Other possible causes of bunions are foot injuries, neuromuscular disorders, or congenital deformities. If you have flat feet or low arches, you are prone to developing these problems, as are arthritic patients and those with inflammatory joint disease.

You can try a few things on your own that may alleviate the pain; apply a commercial, non-medicated bunion pad around the bony lump, wear shoes with a wide and deep toe box and avoid high-heeled shoes. If discomfort persists, you need to see your foot and ankle specialist for medical attention.

A podiatrist has several options of treatment; anti-inflammatory drugs and cortisone injections to ease the pain and inflammation, Physical Therapy to provide relief of the inflammation and pain, orthotics to control foot function, which may reduce symptoms and prevent worsening of the deformity. Surgery may become necessary to remove the bony enlargement, restore the normal alignment of the toe joint, and relieve pain.

As a Fellow of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons and the American Society of Podiatric Surgeons, I am Board Certified in Foot and Rearfoot and Ankle Reconstructive Surgery. I have been practicing podiatric surgery in Central Jersey for the last 10 years, serving all your foot and ankle concerns. If you have any further questions, feel free to contact me. ■

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## The Facts About Hepatitis C

By Krusha Vaidya

**H**epatitis C is a serious liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV). The most common way to get hepatitis C is by coming into contact with the blood of someone who has it.

Hepatitis C is a contagious liver disease that ranges in severity from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious, lifelong illness that attacks the liver. It results from infection with the hepatitis C virus (HCV), which is spread primarily through contact with the blood of an infected person. Hepatitis C can be either "acute" or "chronic."

Acute hepatitis C virus infection is a short-term illness that occurs within the first six months after someone is exposed to the hepatitis C virus. For most people, acute infection leads to chronic infection.

Chronic hepatitis C virus infection is a long-term illness that occurs when the hepatitis C virus remains in a person's body. Hepatitis C virus infection can last a lifetime and lead to serious liver problems, including cirrhosis (scarring of the liver) or liver cancer.

### Is it important to be tested?

It's important for certain people to get tested for the hepatitis C virus. If you answer yes to any of these questions, talk to your doctor about getting tested:

- Were you born between 1945 and 1965?
- Did you have a blood transfusion or organ transplant (get blood or organs from someone else) before 1992?

- Have you ever injected drugs?
- Do you have chronic liver disease, HIV, or AIDS?

Many people who have hepatitis C live for years without feeling sick. But the virus can still damage the liver—even when there aren't any symptoms.

The only way to know for sure if you have hepatitis C is to get a blood test. If you have hepatitis C, treatments may be able to help you live a longer, healthier life.

### What do I ask the doctor?

Visiting the doctor can be stressful. It helps to have questions for the doctor or nurse written down ahead of time. Print this list of questions, and take it to your appointment.

- Do I need to get tested for the hepatitis C virus (HCV)?
- What puts me at risk for hepatitis C?
- How will you test me for hepatitis C?
- How long will it take to get my test results?
- How will I find out my test results?
- If I have hepatitis C, what will happen next?
- Can you give me some information about hepatitis C to take home with me? ■





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## Women Over 55 and Aspirin – The Basics

**H**ow does aspirin help women prevent strokes? Plaque is a sticky substance that sometimes builds up and blocks arteries in the neck. These arteries are supposed to take blood to the brain, but when an artery is blocked, a stroke can occur. Aspirin can help blood flow smoothly to the brain. You may be at higher risk of having a heart attack or stroke if you:

- Smoke
- Have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes
- Have a family history of heart disease
- Have already had a heart attack or stroke

If you are a woman age 55-79, talk with your doctor about your risk of heart attack or stroke, and ask if daily aspirin is right for you. Taking aspirin everyday can lower your risk of heart attack or stroke. For most people, aspirin is safe. But it's not right for everyone. Be sure to talk with your doctor before you start taking aspirin every day.

If you and your provider decide that aspirin is right for you, then you should take either one baby aspirin (81 mg) every day or one regular aspirin (325 mg) every other day.

Taking more aspirin is not any better and can cause serious stomach bleeding. If you have side effects, tell your provider. ■



## New Blood Test for Depression

By Susan Heckler

**D**epression affects nearly 7 percent of U.S. adults each year. Depression comes in many forms; Major Depression (Clinical Depression), Chronic Depression (Dysthymia), Atypical Depression, Postpartum Depression, Bipolar Depression (Manic Depression), Seasonal Depression (SAD) and Psychotic Depression.

Clinical or Major Depression is marked by a depressed mood most of the day, particularly in the morning, and a loss of interest in normal activities and relationships. These symptoms are present every day for at least 2 weeks.

According to WebMD, symptoms may also include:

- Fatigue or loss of energy almost every day
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt almost every day
- Impaired concentration, indecisiveness
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping almost every day
- Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in almost all activities nearly every
- Restlessness or feeling slowed down
- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide



- Significant weight loss or gain (a change of more than 5% of body weight in a month)

There is a new blood test that measures the levels of nine genetic indicators in the blood. The test works by measuring the blood concentration of the RNA markers. A cell's RNA molecules are what interpret its genetic code and then carry out those instructions from DNA. After blood is drawn, the RNA is isolated, measured and compared to RNA levels expected in a non-depressed person's blood. A study published online September 16, 2014 in Translational Psychiatry (with funding

from the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health and the Davee Foundation) established the test's effectiveness with 32 adults who were diagnosed as depressed and 32 non-depressed adults. All of the study participants were between 21 and 79 years old.

While the sample of the population that was used is small and further studies are expected, this could greatly enrich the diagnosis and treatment of depression. The test is not available to the public yet. They would need to test it out on a larger segment of the population before it would be considered for approval by the Food and Drug Administration. ■

# January Is National Eye Care Month

By Brianna Siciliano

Start the new year off the right way by visiting your optometrist or ophthalmologist and making sure your eyes are getting the best care that they need. Our eyes are very valuable, and sometimes we take our eye sight for granted. Imagine participating in all of your activities without seeing a thing; imagine a day where you couldn't see what you were cooking, what your children looked like, what activities your children were participating in, or what clothes you were picking out for the day. Life would be completely different, wouldn't it? Making sure that your eyesight and your children's eyesight is the best it can be is very, very important.

Children should have their eyes checked from the day that they're born by their pediatrician or family doctor. As a parent, it is important to look out for signs that might mean your child may have vision problems. These signs include:

- Constant eye rubbing
- Extreme light sensitivity
- Poor focusing
- Trouble following an object with their eyes
- Chronic redness of the eyes
- Chronic tearing of the eyes
- A white pupil instead of black
- Abnormal alignment or movement of the eyes (after 6 months of age)
- Unable to see objects from a distance
- Having trouble reading the blackboard/whiteboard
- Squinting
- Difficulty reading
- Sitting too close to the television



If you notice any eye problems in your child (or in yourself!), have your child examined right away so that the problem does not become permanent. When caught earlier, eye conditions can often be corrected.

It doesn't hurt to get your eyes—or your children's eyes—checked periodically. Eye care is not something to put off; make sure your eyes, and your family members' eyes, are getting the best possible care that they deserve. ■

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# Beauty Boot Camps

By Susan Heckler

Not happy with your appearance? Join the crowd. If you ask 100 people if they are happy with their looks, my bet is all will say they find fault or could use improvement.

Thus, the new trend of Beautiful Boot Camps popping up all over. They range from interactive websites, to blogs, to brick and mortar stores and retreats. One website describes themselves as a crash course in being beautiful. There are boot camps for makeup, hair and body with some focusing specifically on your age.

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*If it will help you build strength, confidence and happiness, go for it!*

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The Social Institute Research Centre claims that studies show:

- Attractive children are more popular, both with classmates and teachers.
- Teachers give higher evaluations to the work of attractive children and have higher expectations of them (which has been shown to improve performance).



- Attractive applicants have a better chance of getting jobs, and of receiving higher salaries.
- One U.S. study found that taller men earned around \$600 per inch more than shorter executives.
- In court, attractive people are found guilty less often. When found guilty, they receive less severe sentences.

- Many people believe in the “what is beautiful is good” stereotype—an irrational but deep-seated belief that physically attractive people possess other desirable characteristics such as intelligence, competence, social skills, confidence—even moral virtue.

Let's be honest, everyone wants to look their best and feel good about themselves. If you don't, be proactive and do something about it. If it will help you build strength, confidence and happiness, go for it! You don't have to wait for a New Year's resolution to get started. ■

## All You Can App: Great Apps for Better Health

By Brianna Siciliano

The New Year has begun and it is time to achieve some of our resolutions! Year after year, many of us make the same resolution: to become healthier and lose weight. Soon after making this resolution, we come up with excuses and reasons to set back our goals. This is your year! You can do this; you can become a healthier and happier individual. Thanks to the world's incredible technological advances, there are handfuls of health apps on our smart phones just waiting to be downloaded.

One of the most popular fitness apps right now is an app entitled 'Fitbit.' Fitbit is an app that allows you to track your health, activities, and workouts. With this app, you can set goals and track your progress, record your sleep, count your calories, and start a food plan. You can even track how many steps you have taken, what speed you are walking, running, or jogging, how long it took you to get to your destination, and the distance you covered. Who needs a pedometer when you can use your phone? Tracking every aspect of your health is easy thanks to Fitbit!

If you are looking for a helpful app to act simply as a pedometer, then an app called 'Step Pedometer & Step Counter' tracks how far you walk, and how many steps you take, daily. Pedometer apps are great because whenever you go on a walk, jog, or run, you usually bring your phone with you. Participating in an activity as simple as walking in the mall is exercise, believe it or not! Walking is a great way to get your body moving and burn calories, so download the



Step Pedometer & Step Counter app and see how many steps you take today!

An app entitled '7 Minute Workout' is winning the hearts of many smart phone users! Many users prefer 7 Minute Workout, developed by Bytesize, because of every user has the ability to adjust the duration per exercise and rest between the exercise to

the desired duration. 7 Minute Workout is very customizable, and the app starts out for a free price. If you find yourself using the app everyday, and you grow to love the program, you can download the upgraded \$4.99 version. You are bound to have at least seven minutes a day of free time...use it wisely!

One of my favorite apps right now is an app called 'Waterlogged.' This app is great for users who know they need to drink more water, but find themselves losing track of how much water they have already drank. When you first download the app, set a goal of a certain amount of ounces of water you would like to drink each day, and as you log each ounce, you will see how many ounces are needed to achieve your daily goal. This app is perfect for what it was designed for: logging water intake! Waterlogged doesn't have a 5 star rating for nothing!

We are always on our phones; it is time to put our phones to good use. Being healthy has never been easier! ■





# Debunking Winter Myths

By Susan Heckler

**G**rowing up, we all heard health information from our elders that we accepted as fact. But are they fact or an old wives' tale?

## **Cold air can make you sick**

FALSE; cells that fight infection in body actually increase if you go out into the cold, so the opposite is true. Cold viruses grow best at about 91 degrees.

## **A roaring fire will keep you warm**

TRUE; as long as you're sitting within a few feet from the source. The rest of your house may be extremely cold because an open hearth fireplace acts as a vacuum.

## **Drinking alcohol warms you up**

FALSE; your core body temperature actually drops and alcohol actually weakens your body's ability to shiver and create extra heat.

## **Lack of sunlight causes winter depression**

TRUE

## **You shouldn't exercise in the cold**

FALSE; in cold temperatures, race times are actually faster—and quicker paces burn more calories in less time. Make sure you warm up first.

## **Eating chicken soup can zap a cold**

TRUE; chicken soup may have a positive effect on the immune system with something called neutrophil aggregation or bringing white blood cells together to help fight infection.

## **Allergies go away in the winter**

FALSE; one in five people suffer from indoor/outdoor allergies, and the indoor variety can actually be worse in the winter.

## **You don't need sunscreen in the winter**

FALSE; The Earth's surface is closer to the sun during the winter months; we are actually exposed to more harmful rays. Actually, snow and ice can both reflect up to 80% of harmful UV rays so that they can hit the skin twice. You have less exposed skin but it needs protection.

## **You lose most of your body heat through your head**

FALSE; this information was based on a flawed study by the army where volunteers visited the Arctic with their heads exposed. However, the rest of their body was outfitted in gear designed to protect against the cold, so it's logical that they lost most of their body heat from their heads. Any exposed parts make you lose heat.

## **Women gain 10 pounds over the winter**

Partly true; the average woman only gains one or two pounds over the winter, weight gain during the six-week holiday season accounts for 51% of annual weight gain.

## **Vitamin C prevents colds**

Partly true; 75mg recommended daily allowance of vitamin C is important in maintaining a healthy immune system to prevent and even fight off colds, and studies have shown that taking a large dose of vitamin C at the first symptoms may help shorten the length and reduce the severity of a cold. ■

# February is National Children's Dental Health Month

By Brianna Siciliano

**T**he American Dental Association (ADA) annually sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month to bring awareness of the importance of oral health. When you're a parent, you often question when your child needs to get a dental visit, how often visits should be, and how to keep your children's teeth in good health. Parents can feel embarrassed when they do not know the answers, but there is no need for that. These parents are not alone.

What many people do not know is that dental care for children begins before a baby's first tooth appears. As a newborn, most babies have primary teeth developed in their jaws. To take care of your baby's gums and clear your child from harmful bacteria, run a damp washcloth over your baby's gums daily. When teeth begin coming in, parents can brush their child's teeth with an infant toothbrush by using water and a tiny smear of toothpaste up until the baby is around age 2. By then, your child should be old enough to use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with water, and be able to spit the toothpaste in the sink themselves (always with supervision of course!).

When considering dentists to use for your children, it is always a great option to consider pediatric dentists, specialize in treating kids. Pediatric dentists are trained very thoroughly to handle a large variety of issues associated with children's dental health, and they know when you will need to bring your child to a different type of dental specialist, such as an orthodontist or oral surgeon for instance.

When should your child first be seen by a dentist? Prior to his or her first birthday! At this visit, you will meet with your child's dentist and listen to him or her explain the proper techniques you will need to do at home, such as brushing and flossing (flossing must be done when your child has two teeth that touch). The dentist will also conduct a modified exam of the baby's mouth while your baby sits on your lap.

As your child gets older, be sure that he or she is brushing at least twice a day, and routinely flossing, to maintain a healthy mouth. As your child's permanent teeth grow in, it may be a good investment to have your dentist seal out decay from your child's back teeth, which is where most of the chewing occurs. This sealant protects your child's mouth from unwanted, unhealthy bacteria.

This is the month to begin to take action and ask questions. Do not be afraid to call or visit your child's dentist and make sure your child's oral health is the best it can be! ■





# January Is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

By Susan Heckler

The United States Congress designated January as Cervical Health Awareness Month. During January, across the country, issues related to cervical cancer, HPV disease and the importance of early detection are highlighted.

Cervical cancer starts in cells lining the cervix. The cervix is the lower part of the uterus (womb). The cervix connects the body of the uterus to the birth canal. The two main types of cells covering the cervix are squamous cells and glandular cells. The place these cell types meet is called the transformation zone. The location of the transformation zone changes with child birth and as you age. Most cervical cancers start in the cells in the transformation zone.

The normal cells of the cervix gradually develop pre-cancerous changes that turn into cancer. Doctors use several terms to describe these pre-cancerous changes, including cervical intraepithelial neoplasia (CIN), squamous intraepithelial lesion (SIL), and dysplasia.

These changes can be detected by the Pap test and treated to prevent cancer from developing.

There are two main types of cervical cancer: squamous cell carcinoma and adenocarcinoma. About 80% to 90% of cervical cancers are squamous cell carcinomas.

Most of the remaining types of cervical cancers are adenocarcinomas. Adenocarcinomas are cancers that develop from gland cells. Cervical adenocarcinoma develops from the mucus-producing gland cells of the endocervix. Cervical adenocarcinomas seem to have become more common in the last 20 to 30 years.

Less commonly, cervical cancers have features of both squamous cell carcinomas and adenocarcinomas. These are called adenosquamous carcinomas or mixed carcinomas.

Cervical cancer risk factors include:

- Human papilloma virus infection
- Smoking
- Immunosuppression
- Chlamydia infection
- A diet low in fruits and vegetables
- Being overweight
- Long-term use of oral contraceptives (birth control pills)
- Intrauterine device use
- Having multiple full-term pregnancies
- Being younger than 17 at your first full-term pregnancy
- Poverty (without the means of medical screening)
- Diethylstilbestrol (DES)
- Having a family history of cervical cancer

According to the American Cancer Society, women with early cervical cancers and pre-cancers usually have no symptoms. Symptoms often do not begin until a pre-cancer becomes a true invasive cancer and grows into nearby tissue. When this happens, the most common symptoms are:

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding, such as bleeding after intercourse, bleeding after menopause, bleeding and spotting between periods, and having longer or heavier (menstrual) periods than usual. Bleeding after douching, or after a pelvic exam is a common symptom of cervical cancer but not pre-cancer.
- An unusual discharge from the vagina—the discharge may contain some blood and may occur between your periods or after menopause.
- Pain during sex (vaginal intercourse).

Early detection is the key. Get your pap smear annually! ■

## QUESTION:

### Why does my jaw ache in the morning?

Sometimes it makes a popping sound when I open and close my mouth.

Dr. Brandon Elimanco



**Y**ou may be grinding your teeth in your sleep. This can be caused by stress, although it can also be caused by sleep disorders or mechanical issues with your teeth such as misalignment.

The technical term for this is bruxism. It is not good for your overall dental health. Mild grinding doesn't generally need treatment. If your clenching or grinding is severe, you can be fitted with a mouth guard to

wear at night which will protect your teeth and prevent further damage such as jaw disorders, headaches, and damaged teeth,

According to the Mayo Clinic, "Sleep bruxism is considered a sleep-related movement disorder. People who clench or grind their teeth (brux) during sleep are more likely to have other sleep disorders, such as snoring and pauses in breathing (sleep apnea)." In addition to sharing your symptoms with your dentist, it is a good idea to let your general medical practitioner know too.

Not sure if you do this? Some typical signs are:

- Teeth that are flattened, fractured, chipped or loose
- Worn tooth enamel, exposing deeper layers of your tooth
- Increased tooth sensitivity
- Jaw or face pain or soreness
- Tired or tight jaw muscles
- Pain that feels like an earache, though it's actually not a problem with your ear
- Dull headache originating in the temples
- Damage from chewing on the inside of your cheek
- Indentations on your tongue

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**Children do not  
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the words to  
explain what  
is troubling  
them.**

## Is My Child Too Young for Counseling?

By Lance Halpern, Ed.S., LPC.

Parenting can be a challenging business, trust me, I know! Every once in a while, children's needs can seem too overwhelming. That's when some extra support and guidance may be needed. Unfortunately, parents may find themselves frustrated when looking for professional support to address issues concerning their children. Children have their own specific developmental and emotional milestones that make additional concerns even more overwhelming when they surface. Helpful relatives, supportive friends and knowledgeable teachers and pediatricians are sometimes not enough for parents who have specific concerns about their child or teen's emotional well being. At times, those around you may not take your concerns as seriously as you do.

Children, like any of us, have troubles and worries. Sometimes their troubles and worries are bigger than they know how to express or manage. A child may have experienced separation or divorce of their parents, the loss of a loved one or even a pet, low self-esteem, low self-confidence, an alcoholic or addicted parent. They may be struggling in school with academics, or struggling with their relationships with friends or family members. These

are all common issues that many children struggle with.

Young children with behavior or family difficulties don't always feel comfortable in what is known as traditional "talk" in regards to parental communication. Because children do not always have the words to explain what is troubling them, counseling can help them sort out issues through play, art, movement, storytelling, and sand play. Guided, therapeutic play, art, movement, sand play and storytelling along with Cognitive Behavioral and Solution Focused therapies are all effective methods that child therapists use with children.

The greatest gift a parent can give to a child is the gift of an open and stress-free mind. But of course to pass it on, in this current economic climate makes it rather difficult to do at times. With that said, it is pretty impossible for a parent at times not to feel stressed, hassled, fearful or downright depressed, such emotions can trickle down to your young child and in turn overwhelms them, furthering the possibility of an inability to communicate their own feelings of worry and confusion effectively. Let counseling (regardless of a child's age) be a source of support to you

**Some reasons to seek counseling support for your young child:**

- Inability to separate from parents
- Anxious or fearful
- Repeated, ritualistic behavior
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Lack of self-confidence
- Been bullied or is bullying others
- Aggressive behavior
- Lack of interest in activities
- Lack of motivation at school
- Frequent crying
- Moodiness
- Refusal to comply with rules and expectations

during any challenging time. Counseling a child in a time of need is not to be used to tell you what you should do, but rather to assist you in gaining information about your child's needs and in turn, should provide you with strategies that can make a difference in the life of your child. ■



# How Can I Help My Child Develop Healthy Self-Esteem?

By Brianna Siciliano

As children grow older, they become more and more observant. They listen to what other people around them--especially their peers--have to say. Kids pick up on all sorts of actions, beliefs, knowledge, and images, and unfortunately, sometimes these are not positive. How children feel about themselves can depend on many factors, including standards that have been set for themselves, the environment their time is spent in, and experiences that they have grown up through. Although some of these factors are out of your control as your child's parent, others can be influenced by you!

If and when you hear your child make a negative comment about herself, call your child out. Let your son or daughter know that he/she is a beautiful and special blessing, and how great he/she is in different areas. Point out things that your child should be proud of, for example their hard work in a certain activity or sport, their good grades, or their great relationships with others. Different people excel in different categories! Make sure your child knows how great he or she is!

To boost your his or her self-esteem, it is important to help your child recognize and modify the negative thoughts about him or herself. Being reminded of their importance, and having their incredible abilities pointed out, is a major confidence boost to children. Saying something as simple as,

"You have been doing a great job in school lately! All of your hard work is paying off. I'm very proud of you!" will let your child know that they are noticed and valued.

As a parent, it is extremely important to be careful of what you say because kids are very sensitive to parents' words. Remember to praise your child for their effort and their successes. When a child doesn't achieve something, like for example making the soccer team, he or she is in a vulnerable place. Instead of saying something like, "You'll make the team next time, you just need to work harder," say something along the lines of, "You didn't make the team, but you put in some great effort and I'm proud of you!" This will have a much better end result for your child's self-esteem.

Parents can also help by being positive role models, giving positive and accurate feedback, and being affectionate and spontaneous. Children look up to their parents and learn a lot from their home environment; if a child sees their mother loving her body, then the child will want to love their own body, too!

Kids should grow up feeling special and great, not normal or average. With your help, your child can feel like a million bucks. Make sure your children know how loved, special, and beautiful they are! ■





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## Safety First with Winter Sports

By Brianna Siciliano

Winter weather brings opportunities to play a wide variety of winter sports, both indoors and outdoors. Who wants to spend time on the couch when they can snowboard, ski, ice skate, roller skate, play hockey, or play basketball? No one; all of us would much rather have fun and be daring. Before the fun can begin, take steps to ensure that nothing can go wrong with the activities that your children are participating in or the gear that your children are wearing. By taking the tips below into consideration and taking action to ensure your children are safe, winter sports can become more enjoyable and your family can have fun and stay healthy all season long.

Activities that involve the cold—for example ice-skating, hockey, snowboarding, sledding, and skiing—can often lead to minor and major accidents and injuries. One second your son is standing up at the top of the snowy hill, and the next he can be plummeting downhill because something went wrong. To be sure that your children are as safe as they can be, make sure everyone is wearing the proper gear. If your child's sport involves a helmet and

goggles as head gear, be sure that your child is wearing them. Safety is not a suggestion; safety is a necessity.

Before allowing your child to do something for the day, like sledding for instance, make sure you know where the sledding will happen. Will the kids be sledding in a local park with a major hill? Are there trees or other obstacles that can cause the sledding to go wrong? You must think of everything before okaying any situation. After all, it is better to be safe than sorry.

When your children are outdoors in their sports gear, whether wearing basketball shorts and a jersey or hockey gear, always be confident that your child will have layers to wear. The freezing temperatures can be dangerous to our health; skin become dry when exposed to the cold, frostnip and frostbite risks heighten, and chances of illness (like a common cold or a flu) rise. It is important for children (and adults) to cover up and dress in layers whenever leaving the house and exposing their bodies to the winter weather. Whether a person is exposed to the winter weather for two minutes or two hours, it is necessary to bundle up and stay warm. No precautions can be too excessive. ■





# Dealing with Picky Eaters

By Brianna Siciliano

When kids refuse to eat certain foods, it can be extremely frustrating. Sometimes picky eaters begin loving and enjoying foods, and with the snap of their fingers, they loathe the same foods. Could it be because they eat the same meal over and over again, and they're tired of it? Possibly, but there are many other reasons.

One reason your child might be refusing to eat certain things is because of his or her desire to be independent. This situation is just like asking your child whether she wants to wear the pink shirt that you picked out or the purple shirt hanging in her closet. Do you even have to ask? Whatever you pick out, she does not want. Children want to make their own choices, so try to avoid arguments and fights and give your children some power over their food. Instead of preparing a different plate of food for your picky eater, let your child help you food shop and prepare meals. You'll get a better taste of what foods your child is willing to eat.

Another reason your child might be refusing to eat certain foods is because he/she truly does not like those foods. Your son might have a sweet tooth and be disgusted by the taste of 'bitter' foods. This is a logical reason for a child to refuse to eat certain foods. To help overcome this refusal, try switching things up once in a while. If your child despises certain vegetables,



like broccoli for instance, do not cut the food from your family's diet all together. Instead, serve green beans one night, asparagus the next, followed by broccoli. Sometimes it takes 10 to 15 tries before a child accepts and enjoys new foods, so give the foods a chance before giving up all together. If this doesn't seem to work, it might be worth your while to try preparing foods in a different way.

Instead of steaming vegetables, try sautéing them. You never know what the outcome can be!

If your child enjoys peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and refuses to eat anything else, try warming your child up to try new foods. Spread peanut butter on new foods, like apples and celery, and see if your child will begin warming up to new foods. Sometimes picky eaters want to stick to their favorite foods, which is completely understandable. If you could eat your favorite dessert over and over again, you would, wouldn't you? Sometimes it is necessary to present

foods in interesting ways, or use cookie cutters to transform 'boring' looking foods into fun shapes, to spark your child's interest. By showing your child that you care, and that you won't force things he or she does not want, your child will trust you and open up his or her mind to trying new things. ■

## QUESTION:

**My child's teeth look straight. Why does he/she need braces?**

Dr. Sezer Olcay



Even though most kids want braces at one point (because their friends have them), most parents aren't really sure why, and if their child "needs" braces.

The teeth may be perfectly straight but the bite may be off. There could be an "overbite" where the top teeth are protruding, or an "underbite" where the top teeth are inside the bottom teeth. This maybe just a dental problem, where the interdigitation of the teeth are off, or it could be a more serious skeletal problem where the relationship of the top jaw to the bottom jaw needs a correction. Orthodontic treatment can correct both teeth and jaw alignment problems. However, age is an important factor. Bite issues with underlying jaw discrepancies can only be corrected in



a growing child. Once growth stops then any bite correction becomes a surgical procedure.

The American Association of Orthodontics and Dento-facial Orthopedics recommends that children are seen by an orthodontist by age 7. To start orthodontic treatment not all baby teeth have to be lost. Sometimes treatment is started with plenty of baby teeth to make room for the adult teeth. It all depends on the problem.

For any questions or concerns regarding your child's teeth please call the office for a complementary evaluation.

**Dr. Olcay's specialization is in orthodontics and dento-facial orthopedics which means correction of teeth and jaw discrepancies. Depending on your situation, Dr. Olcay can treat your overbite or underbite with various treatment options like braces, a retainer, or Invisalign.**

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## Embrace Your Beautiful Curls

### by Using Ouidad's Perfect Products

By Brianna Siciliano

Many hair stylists and hair salons promote hair straightening products and techniques, and without knowing it, these stylists and salons are lowering the confidence levels of many curly and wavy headed clients. Thankfully, in 1984, Ouidad (the curl experts) opened the first salon in the country exclusively for curly hair. Known as the "Queen of Curl," Ouidad decided to develop products specifically for curly and wavy hair. She believes that curly hair is beautiful and an art; clients with curly hair should feel sexy, gorgeous, and confident, and in order for that to happen, these clients need to embrace their beautiful head of hair!

Every Ouidad product is gentle, water-soluble, and moisturizing. After using Ouidad products, curly and wavy headed clients have healthy, manageable, and frizz-free hair. All Ouidad products and stylists are committed to delivering the best results for all different kinds of curly hair.

If you are looking to repair damaged curls, tame unruly locks, preserve your hair's color, fight humidity and heat, or moisturize your head of hair, then you need to shop for Ouidad hair products. As a matter of fact, if you are looking to do just about anything to improve and embrace your curly hair, then Ouidad products are perfect for you!

Every Ouidad specialist has undergone extensive training to focus on important aspects of curl care. Ouidad stylists are masters of the Carving & Slicing method, which is an Ouidad unique haircut created specially for curly and wavy hair, and the Rake & Shake styling method, which is designed to create perfect curls every time.

It is time to embrace, nourish, and celebrate your gorgeous curls. Trusting Ouidad products to take great care of your hair will change your life forever for the better! ■

# What to Expect After a Hysterectomy

By Krusha Vaidya

A hysterectomy is a surgery to remove a woman's uterus or womb. After a hysterectomy, you no longer have menstrual periods and can't become pregnant. Sometimes the surgery also removes the ovaries and fallopian tubes. If you have both ovaries taken out, you will enter menopause.

It will take at least 3 to 6 weeks to feel better. You will probably get tired easily during this time. You may not feel like eating much.

You will not have any scars on your skin unless your doctor used a laparoscope and other instruments that were inserted through your belly. In that case, you will have 2-4 scars less than 1" long.

If you had good sexual function before the surgery, you should continue to have good sexual function afterward. If you had problems with severe bleeding before your hysterectomy, sexual function often improves after surgery. If you have a decrease in your sexual function after your hysterectomy, talk with your health care provider about possible causes and treatments. In most other cases, a hysterectomy is an elective procedure. The operation is done to improve the quality of life: to relieve pain, heavy bleeding or other chronic conditions and discomfort.

Slowly increase how much activity you do every day. It is important to take short walks and increase how far you go gradually. Do not jog, do sit-ups, or other sports until you have checked with your doctor. A hysterectomy is a common procedure. ■

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# Spa Treatments That Will Warm You Up

By Brianna Siciliano

The cold weather does not seem to be leaving anytime soon, and it seems like we are doing anything we can to keep warm: taking long, hot showers, drinking hot tea, coffee, and hot chocolate, and cuddling up with our children, spouses, pets, and blankets. Wouldn't it be great to warm yourself up while getting pampered all at the same time? Well, it is possible! Ask your local spa if any (or all) of these wonderful spa treatments are available for you!

If you are looking to loosen your tight, knotted muscles, ease your tension, and relieve stress, a Hot Stone Massage is perfect for you! The heat that the hot stones provide are extremely relaxing. The stones also warm up your tight muscles, helping your massage therapist work deeper and quicker to unknotting your tight muscles.

Another fabulous spa treatment that will warm you up is a Seaweed Skin Treatment. For this body treatment, fresh seaweed is warmed up to body temperature and smoothed over your body to help get rid of toxins, while softening, your skin. Seaweed is a great source of healing! When applied to your skin, seaweed can combat acne, reduce toxins in your skin, fight cellulite, and supply your skin with moisture. Once the seaweed treatment is finished, you end the process by taking a warm shower and applying seaweed cream onto your skin. How could you pass up the opportunity of receiving this beneficial treatment?

If you are looking for a massage that will focus on helping chronic muscle aches and pains, leg muscle tightness, sore shoulders, or on realigning deep layers of muscles, then a Deep Tissue Massage is what you have been searching for! Deep tissue massages physically break down the causes of your tension and pain to relieve suffering and restore normal movement. Therapists usually use massage oil, hot towels, and firm pressure to relax your muscle tissues. By the end of this massage, you will have less pain and more mobility.

Get rid of all of your worrying, stress, tension, and pains by making an appointment to pamper and warm yourself up! You deserve it! ■



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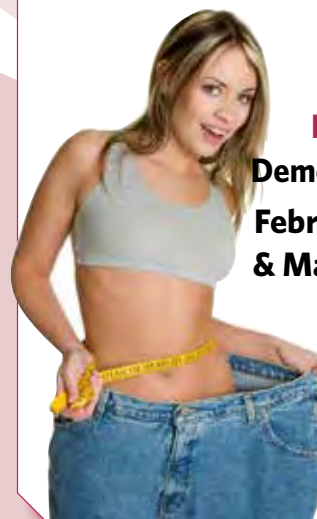
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# Plan a Healthy Heart Day to Celebrate American Heart Month

By Brianna Siciliano

Our hearts work every second of every day in our lives, but we hardly ever show appreciation—or even celebrate—how much our hearts do. It is time to change that! February is American Heart Month, and the American Heart Association hopes that during this month people will become more aware of their risks of heart disease and strokes. This month is the perfect time to meet with your doctors and cardiologists to see how healthy your heart is!

It is always fun to go all-out and celebrate milestones—for instance, we celebrate birthdays, religious holidays, and our freedom—so why not go all-out and celebrate our pumping hearts? The hearts that keep us alive through great times and bad times. To celebrate American Heart Month, you can be as creative as you'd like! You can encourage your family to wear red (on one distinct day or on as many days as possible!), eat heart healthy foods, and exercise to keep your heart rate up!

With that said, there comes one important question: what foods are heart healthy? There are plenty of heart-healthy foods that you and your family love, including salmon, oatmeal, kidney beans, almonds, red wine (in moderation!), brown rice, blueberries, carrots, spinach, sweet potatoes, oranges, tea, dark chocolate, and so much more! It might be fun to celebrate one day filled with all heart-healthy foods. You never know—your family might love those foods so much that you find yourselves cooking with heart-healthy foods more often!

As for exercising, the best exercises to get your heart pumping are cardio-based exercises. Great exercises are jumping rope (and if you can't jump rope with an actual rope, pretend you are holding one), dancing (come on, who doesn't love having a dance party?), jumping jacks, step-ups, et cetera. Celebrating American Heart Month can be very fun or very boring. It's up to you how you choose to celebrate. ■



A roadmap  
to create  
a more  
physically  
active  
nation



## National Physical Activity Plan GET INVOLVED

In the coming months, the National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP) will celebrate its 5th anniversary at the 2015 National Physical Activity Plan Congress. Since its launch, the NPAP has acted as a roadmap to policy makers and advocates to create a more physically active nation. This strategic plan is comprised of 240+ evidence-based recommendations for change in the policies and systems that guide the environments in which all Americans live, work, learn, play, and commute.

Over the past five years the field of physical activity and public health has continued to evolve and the time to review and update the National Physical Activity Plan's content and structure is here!

In an effort to update and revise the National Physical Activity Plan, the Alliance has composed a survey to collect public comment on the existing version of the Plan. To date, over 900 Americans have provided valuable comments that will help shape the next iteration of the Plan. However, we want to hear from you!

- How do we get there?
- What strategies and tactics do you think need to be added to the current version of the Plan?
- What strategies should be identified as high priority during the revision?
- How can we incorporate these changes and make the Plan more user-friendly and successful?

Please share your thoughts on how we should move forward as a nation by: For more info about participating in our public comment survey and/or attending the 2015 National Physical Activity Plan Congress in Washington D.C. on February 23-24, 2015, visit [www.health.gov/NPAPA](http://www.health.gov/NPAPA).

These opportunities represent important opportunities to shape the next iteration of the Plan and we invite all Americans to provide feedback on the Plan. Ultimately, the NPAP will reach success when the vast majority of Americans regularly meet or surpass the Physical Activity Guidelines. For this reason, the update of the NPAP is crucial in order to ensure the Plan's ongoing growth and success! ■

# Resolve to Resolve

## Healthy New Year's Resolutions

By Susan Heckler

Here we go again, another New Year's Eve and another New Year's resolution. This year, let's make a resolution to stick to your resolution. How can you make this happen?

Just because you have had a bad track record of sticking to them in the past doesn't mean you can't do it in the future. Your future starts now.

You have to be realistic and set your goals that are attainable. Choose a safe, attainable goal and make the time-frame realistic. You can have your goal in increments. Take it one resolution at a time so you don't overwhelm yourself and everyone around you. You also want to be certain that your resolution is something that is in your control.

Many people make the mistake of setting their goals to please other people. MISTAKE! It needs to express your own wants, need and desires and be something you feel strongly about.

Some of the most popular healthy resolutions for anyone at any age are:

|                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Lose weight              | More sleep             |
| Practice portion control | Travel more            |
| Stay in touch            | Be more active         |
| Stop smoking             | Reduce sodium intake   |
| Save money               | Increase Anti-oxidants |
| Reduce stress            | Floss                  |
| Volunteer                | Protect from sun       |
| Continuing Education     | Strength train         |
| Drink less alcohol       |                        |

One of the greatest resolutions you can make is toward your health and wellness. Any progress you make, even if you don't achieve your goal, is a positive for you.

A 2002 study found while about 75% of people stick to their goals for at least a week, less than half (46%) are still on target six months later. A week of healthier living is a plus.

The more you use your willpower, the stronger it gets. Once you start feeling the rewards of your resolution, slimming down, feeling healthier, it will encourage you to keep up the good work. ■



# Ways to Walk More This Winter

By Brianna Siciliano

The freezing temperatures are here, and we are all coming up with more and more excuses to stay indoors and sit by our fireplaces with hot soups, hot coffees, and hot chocolates in our hands. Our bodies are craving comfort foods and sleep during winter, but we need to fight those cravings and do our best to walk as often as we can. Walking in the winter can do great things, such as:

- Keep your bones strong and working
- Improve your mood
- Motivate you to continue working out in the days, weeks, and months to come
- Burn calories

When walking in the winter, try to avoid constantly walking on the treadmill day by day. After a few days, you will get bored following the same routine, unless you find that you like walking on the treadmill. Then by all means, keep it up!

Walking while watching an episode of your favorite television show is much better than lounging on your couch, eating a bag of popcorn, and being lazy! However, if you are looking for different ways to get moving, try walking when doing simple things, for example when you are on the phone.



Whether you are on a business phone call, talking to your parents or children, or catching up with friends, phone calls can take a while. If you were to walk throughout your entire phone call, even if you are just pacing around your house, you'll be burning calories. Imagine if you took a little less than 100 steps per minute and you were on the phone for an hour...you would have walked around

6,000 steps already! On average, a mile is about 2,000 steps, which means you could walk three miles just by making a phone call.

If you have friends or family in the area that you'd like to catch up with while being busy, go to the mall together. By browsing around the stores and making conversation, you won't even realize that you're walking! You can catch up on gossip, spend quality time together, and maybe even get some shopping in. By the time you leave the mall, you

could lose some calories (and possibly money, too!).

Walking may not seem like exercising, but it is! It is important to not give up and keep moving. Walking can be done at anytime, anywhere, whether you are at work, outdoors, in your home, or in the mall. Why not stand up and get walking right now? ■

# Listen to Your Body; It's Crying Out for Help

By Susan Heckler

Your body is a reflection of you and your lifestyle. If you do not look well or feel well, it is your body telling you that something is amiss. Mind shouldn't be over matter in this case, listen to your body rather than your brain as your brain may be telling you to do something that may be emotionally pleasing but physically damaging.

Problems with your eating habits, weight and your body image are all in your head. As your head makes these good or bad decisions, your body feels the impact. Aches, pains, weight loss or gain, poor complexion, lack-luster hair, brittle nails, and dental issues are just some of the symptoms that something is happening in your body that needs adjustment. You need to pay attention to these signs and symptoms and understand it is your body speaking to you and telling you to change. It is all cause and effect.

If you don't drink enough water, your body will tell you with dry skin, dark urine and other signs. You are not sleeping well so your body is showing fatigue. You drink too much coffee and your body

responds with the jitters. Your bowel movements may reflect too much or too little roughage. Something as simple as a food craving may be your body telling you it needs certain nutrients.

Listening to your body during a workout is the same thing. If you have pain somewhere, other than normal Charlie horse, you may be doing an exercise in a poor posture or position that needs to be altered. If you don't listen to the symptom, repetition of the same movement may tear a muscle or inflame a tendon.

With all of the medical information available on the web, you can even google a site and enter your symptoms to find a possible physical ailment they relate to. Years ago, my friend had severe abdominal pain which worsened with deep breaths, nausea and chills with bloating and shoulder pain. What we thought might be food poisoning turned out to be symptoms of gall bladder problems when we googled on a medical website, which alerted her to see a physician. ■



*Your body is a reflection of you and your lifestyle. If you do not look well or feel well, it is your body telling you that something is amiss.*

## Three Self-Help Books That Should Be on Your To-Read List

By Brianna Siciliano

Becoming a more focused, connected, happier, and successful person is possible, and it can happen at an extremely affordable price!

If you are looking to become more effective and efficient, open up your eyes to Jeff Sutherland's *Scrum: The Art of Doing Twice the Work in Half the Time*. Many of us find it hard to equally distribute our effort and energy to the task at hand, and we often struggle to figure out how long each task will take. No matter what you are doing, whether it's organizing an event, preparing for a business meeting, or making a tasty homemade meal for the entire family, reading Sutherland's helpful novel will help you make the transition into an efficient and effective worker in every task you begin and complete!

Looking to set, manage, and achieve long-term goals? *The Happiness of Pursuit: Finding the Quest That Will Bring Purpose to Your Life*, written by Chris Guillebeau, is the perfect self-help book for you! In his book, Guillebeau shares the secrets that have annually helped him achieve greatness, and he encourages every reader to try his methods out, too! Once a year, he asks himself, "What went well this year?" and "What did not go well this year?" To answer these questions, make a list of different ideas, projects, and activities attempted



throughout the year. He then suggests to take a week to think about why things succeeded or failed, what obstacles stood in the way, and what factors helped your pursuit of happiness and success thrive. You will be an expert of achieving goals once you read *The Happiness of Pursuit: Finding the Quest That Will Bring Purpose to Your Life*!

Living with too much stress is not enjoyable, especially when your busy days have

no room for free time. Write corporate trainers Jones Loflin and Todd Musig, who train many companies in time management and life-work balance have put together an incredible self-help book entitled, *Getting to It: Accomplishing the Important, Handling the Urgent, and Removing the Unnecessary*, that is designed to help readers spend more time participating in enjoyable activities and less time on stressful ones. By following Loflin and Musig's two step to-do list, readers will adjust their daily schedules and make everyday less stressful and enjoyable.

Whatever you would like to achieve, whether it's ways to control your anger or rage or ways to find confidence and motivation, self-help books can help you out! ■





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# Evening Rituals Can Improve Your Life

By Brianna Siciliano

**W**aking up happy is the perfect way to start our days! It would be incredible to wake up in a great mood everyday, right? By following evening rituals and cleansing your spirit, freeing your mind, and organizing your life (and business), you can surely have a great tomorrow.

Rituals have strong influences on our feelings, behaviors, and thoughts, and without even realizing it, we follow our own personal rituals everyday. In the morning, what's the first thing you do? Do you have a specific routine you follow, for example shutting off your alarm, using a bathroom, and brushing your teeth in that exact order? If so, you have set your morning ritual without even realizing it! Although plenty of people follow their morning rituals, not many people follow evening rituals. It is time to change that.

Evening rituals guarantee a pleasing, refreshing rest period through the night. When you lay in bed before falling asleep, you tend to think of the things you have, and have not yet, accomplished. Like morning rituals, evening rituals are not the same for everyone. Rituals are meant to be personalized, after all, so design your evening rituals around what works for you. Evening rituals depend on your needs, but to get started on designing and following a smooth path to a great night's sleep and an even greater tomorrow, try out a few of these rituals:

## **Write down what you're proud of!**

Everyday we successfully achieve many small victories (sometimes we achieve major victories!) and by the end of the night, we fail to

acknowledge the progress that we make. We stress over the failures instead of successes in the middle of the night. Well, it is time to change that. By writing down three (or more) things that you are proud of, and focusing on the things that you did right throughout your day, you will wake up more motivated to continue making progress. No matter what kind of day you are having, you are bound to have at least two positive moments.

## **Make time for family!**

At the end of the day, a great evening ritual could be spending time with your spouse and/or children. Reading books to little ones, talking about your child's day, and/or complimenting your spouse on something you have recently noticed and appreciated will result in a perfect way to end your day.

*By following evening rituals, you are bound to have better sleep at night and a better day once you wake up. Do yourself a favor and design nighttime rituals that will benefit you the most!*

## **Turn off electronics!**

The brightness of electronic screens keeps you up longer by tricking you into believing that it is the time to send emails, text messages, and calls instead of winding down for bed time. Put your phone, tablet, and/or laptop away and spend some time reading a book, preparing an outfit for tomorrow, or drinking a late night treat (a warm cup of milk, hot chocolate, or water; avoid sodas and caffeine!)

When's the last time you slept like a baby? A few months—possibly a few years—ago? Let's change that! You deserve nothing but the best; let's make sure all your days and nights are the best they can be! ■



# Tap to Eliminate Your Problems and Worries

By Brianna Siciliano

Do you want your life to thrive and flourish so that you can finally be the best you possible? Are you finally ready to live the life that was meant for you, a life full of fulfillment, joy, and excitement? It's about time to make a change and start living a successful, thriving life, which can be achieved by tapping.

The basic technique for tapping requires you to focus on the negative emotion that is deeply bothering you, whether it is a bad memory, a fear or anxiety, an unresolved problem, or anything that is bothering you. Once you identify the problem you would like to focus on, compose a set up statement that acknowledges the problem you want to deal with and overcome. It can be as simple as, "Even though I panic when I think about \_\_\_\_\_, I deeply and completely accept myself."



While mentally focusing on this issue, use two fingertips to lightly tap 5-7 times on each of the 9 body peak points. Tapping and concentrating on these points will access your body's energy and restore it to a balanced state.

The energy peak points should be tapped in this order:

1. The top of the head (it is recommended that all four fingers on both hands are used)
2. The eyebrow (use two fingers on the inner edges of the eyebrows)
3. Side of the eyes (on the bone bordering the outside corner of your eye)
4. Under the eyes (the hard area under the eye; use two fingers and tap about an inch below your pupil)
5. Under your nose (tap on the small area between the bottom of your nose and top of your upper lip)
6. Chin (tap midway between the point of your chin and the bottom of your lower lip)
7. Collar Bone (tap just below the hard ridge of your collarbone with four fingers on each hand)
8. Underarm (tap about four inches beneath the armpit; use four fingers)
9. Head (Right back to where you started)

While tapping, repeat simple reminder phrases, such as "my anxiety" or "my interview." Keep tapping until your anxiety is gone, and once that happens, install some positive feelings into your body. You can say, for example, "I love the person that I am," or "I have faith in my ability to change."

Try to repeat the tapping technique about ten times per day. Soon, all of your negative energy will be released and you will finally be the positive, healthy person you have always dreamt of being! ■

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# Smart Solutions When You Ate, Drank and Were Too Merry

By Susan Heckler

One of the biggest problems of the holidays is that we all tend to break out the old family recipes and traditions to make our holiday fare delicious and memorable. We tend to linger around the table longer, enjoying family and friends with seconds and thirds of our favorite dishes. Granny's recipes, while mouthwatering, did not take into account new nutritional information and guidelines for better health. While rich in nostalgia and flavor, chances are they are loaded with sodium, sugar and unnecessary fat.

The best way to stop weight gain during the holiday season is to monitor what we put into our mouths. That being said, how can you turn back the calorie clock once the damage is done?

Some recommendations may be:

- Morning exercise is more effective than other times of the day, which is not to say morning or nothing. Any exercise is better than none. Keep Moving!
- Make smart choices from here on; eat only what you love and observe all of your choices before loading up your plate. Envision everything on your plate being pasted on your body; it will stir up some willpower.

- Banking your calories isn't effective; starving all day to indulge on dinner is not a just reward. Frequent, smaller meals are the trick.
  - Taste rather than eat it all. A few bites of each dish should satisfy your need-to-feed rather than cleaning your plate. You are not denying yourself the flavor, just the pounds.
  - If you can't cook less food, from now on ask guests to bring their containers for leftovers. You will be their best friend, sending them home with goodies and getting the goodies away from your temptation.
  - Haste makes waist; eating slowly means less fork-fulls per hour. Dial it down a bit and watch your body slim.
    - Fill up on healthy fruit and vegetables rather than carbs.
    - Drink water; it fills you, flushes your system and hydrates your body.
- Have a happy, healthier New Year! ■



## The 3 Best High-Fat Foods For You

By Brianna Siciliano

After cutting out different food groups for various periods of times, we have all (hopefully) learned that we need every food group in our diet, including fats too! Fatty foods help us absorb fat-soluble vitamins, keep us fuller for a longer time frame, and even help our hearts stay healthy (depending on the type of fat, of course. Cookie dough doesn't do much help to our hearts!) There are many high-fat foods available, but which three are the best to eat? Avocados, olive oil, and nuts!

Avocados are one of the healthiest fatty-foods in the world, giving our bodies approximately 23 grams of fat, tons of fiber, and great antioxidants (including lutein, which is an antioxidant that protects our vision). Since avocados are filled with fat, it may not be in your best interest to consume the entire avocado in one sitting. Instead, have some avocado with your breakfast (for example spread a little bit on your toast or mix some in with your vegetable omelet), lunch, and dinner (replace bad fats like mayonnaise with avocado spread).

Another source of healthy fat is nuts, specifically pistachios, almonds, and walnuts. These nuts are all rich in a vitamin or mineral of some sort. Almonds, for instance, are filled with vitamin E, walnuts with plant-based omega-3 fatty acid, and pistachios with lutein and zeaxanthin (important for eye health). If you are trying to decide which of these nuts is best to keep stocked in your house snack wise, pistachios are the way to go! While a serving of almonds is anywhere from 14 to 23 almonds, and a serving of walnuts is 14 walnut halves, a serving of pistachios is 49 of the delicious nuts.

Olive oil is another great choice when looking for the best high-fat foods. Known to reduce the risk of heart disease, lower blood pressure, and reduce the risk of certain cancers, olive oil should be your go-to oil. You can use oil when cooking and sautéing foods, to substitute sauce or butter when making pasta, or to replace salad dressings. Just be sure to use olive oil, like avocados and nuts, sparingly. You don't want too many calories or too much fat in your everyday diet! ■



# Coach's Corner

By Jill Garaffa

Dear Jill,

*There's a pattern that repeats every year when I write my list of "New Year's Resolutions" or any other time of year when a milestone has been reached (like my birthday or anniversary) and I'm hoping you can help me break it. Each year, I look at all the areas of my life that need fixing. I look at my bad habits that I want to change. The first week or so things are fine. Then, I start to slip and eventually completely give up. The following year, the list of things I want to change is discouragingly similar to the year before, so it always looks like I'm trying to fix the same thing.*

*How can I break out of this pattern and get some momentum going in the right direction?*

*Frustrated,  
T.J. in Holmdel, NJ*

Dear T.J.

Thank you for your courage to ask about a topic to which so many people can relate! There are a few things I can offer from a coaching standpoint to help you move forward.

First, take a look at your language. Anytime your focus is on "fixing" or "changing" something about yourself you will actually end up repelling the very thing that you say you want. The secret is to be grateful and celebrate where you are in this very moment. What accomplishments have you already achieved? Why is this area of your life not worse? (It could always be worse, right?) You are doing something right. What is it?

Coming from a place of gratitude & celebration in an area of life you'd like to transform provides more power than when you come from a place of judgment. You are either blessing or cursing the very thing you want by your intention around it.

Next, true and lasting change comes from the inside out. In order for a goal to come alive, it must be connected to something you deeply value and believe is possible. Why is this goal important to you? What is worth the sacrifice you will be making to achieve this goal?

Last, in order to create momentum, connect your goal to a clear vision & action plan. See yourself a year from now, succeeding. If this goal is a reality in one year, what actions would you need to take right now? This allows your future to pull you forward and your goals to come alive!

Wishing you clarity, focus & power!  
Jill



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## Six Snacks for Your Post Workout

By Brianna Siciliano

**F**eeding your body after a workout is important! By eating after working out, your body will replenish glycogen stores and repair your muscle tissues. You will not want to feed your body with junk and unneeded calories; eating a bowl of ice cream or a bag of tortilla chips is not going to give you the same fuel that you will get after drinking a protein shake. So what are the top six snacks that you can have after working out? Find out below!

**1. Hummus and pita:** Eating hummus and whole wheat pita is a great way to get carbohydrates and protein into your system. Hummus, which is a dip made from pureed chickpeas, is a tasty, nutritious topping that can be paired with nearly anything (from veggies like carrots and celery to pita, chips, and crackers). When pairing hummus with whole wheat pita, which gives your body energy, you will not feel too hungry in the hours to come.

**2. A protein shake with banana:** Protein shakes that are made with whey protein, water, and half a banana are great energy boosters. Like option number one, this snack is filled with a great protein and carbohydrate combination, keeping you fuller longer.

**3. Tuna on toast:** Tuna is a lean protein, which means it is a go-to option for the perfect post-workout snack. When making your tuna, stay away from mayonnaise and stick to drizzling a little lemon juice and a little bit of olive oil over four ounces of tuna. Then spread the tuna over a slice of whole wheat toast. When working out, you will look forward to enjoying this tasty snack!

**4. Simple homemade trail mix:** Store bought trail mix usually is not a healthy choice (unless you found an unsalted version packed with nutritious proteins). Take the time to put together a few containers of your own trail mix, packed with roasted nuts, raisins, and seeds. This is a great option for those of us who love to nibble on food!

**5. Yogurt and Fresh Berries:** Greek yogurt is a great source of protein and is packed with nutrients, but lacks the perfect taste for some people's taste buds. Add a few fresh berries to your yogurt to provide your body with more carbohydrates and make this snack more delicious.

**6. Veggie Omelet:** Eggs are packed with protein, and when mixed with some of your favorite vegetables, eggs can keep you full for a long, long time. Although we worry about what egg yolks will do to our cholesterol levels, everything is fine in moderation. However, if you eat eggs actively, it may be in your best interest to eat yolks sparingly. ■



# Healthy Slow-Cooked Recipes

By Brianna Siciliano



Daily schedules can be hectic and stressful. After a long day of putting all your energy into different tasks (like work, school, chores, errands, etc), there are days where cooking dinner seems like too much of a hassle. You've already used up most of your energy, and cooking will only suck up some more. Isn't there a way to have a hot dinner ready for dinner time, without involving so much energy in the late afternoon/early evening? Yes, there is: slow cooking with a crock pot! By preparing your dinner in the morning and following the directions for different crock pot meals, your dinners could be cooked over the span of a few hours, and when dinner time comes around, your meal will be hot and tasty. ■

## Slow-Cooked Braised Pork with Salsa

Serves 8 with a generous  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup per serving

### Ingredients

- 3 pounds boneless pork shoulder, or butt
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups prepared tomatillo salsa (or any salsa you prefer)
- 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds, or ground cumin
- 3 plum tomatoes, thinly sliced
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped fresh cilantro, divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup reduced-fat sour cream

### Directions



Trim and discard pork surface fat. Then cut the meat apart by following layers of fat around the muscles, and trim and discard the fat. Cut the meat into 2-inch chunks and rinse these chunks with cold water. Finish this step off by placing the meat in a 5 or

6-quart slow cooker. Turn the heat to high.

Next, combine the salsa, broth, onion, and cumin seeds into a saucepan and boil these ingredients over high heat. Once boiled, pour this mixture over the meat. Once the mixture is added, top everything off with the tomatoes, and gently mix all the ingredients together. Put the lid on the slow cooker (crock pot) and cook until the meat is pull-apart tender, which should be 6 to 7 hours.

With a slotted spoon, transfer the pork from the slow cooker (crock pot) into a large bowl, and cover the bowl to keep your food warm. Pour the sauce and vegetables in a large skillet so you can skim the fat. Boil the sauce and veggies for about 20 minutes on high, and while the sauce and veggies are boiling, skim the broth from time to time to intensify flavors and slightly thicken the mixture. Add the pork and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of cilantro to the vegetables and sauce, and heat everything up.

Finish the recipe off by placing servings into bowls and topping each serving off with a dollop of sour cream and sprinkling of the remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of cilantro. ■

## Slow-Cooked Turkey Stronganoff

Serves 6, with each serving getting 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups of stew and 1 cup of noodles each

### Ingredients

- 8 cups sliced mixed mushrooms
- 3 medium carrots, sliced
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 3 to 4-pound split turkey breast, skin removed, trimmed
- 1 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup dry sherry
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 8 ounces whole-wheat egg noodles (6 cups dry), cooked
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley

### Directions

Combine mushrooms, carrots, and onion in a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker. Add the turkey, meat side down, to the slow cooker. Cover and cook on High for 4 hours, or on Low for 8 hours.

Transfer the turkey to a cutting board once it's finished cooking.

Whisk sour cream, flour, and sherry in a bowl. Stir into the slow cooker with the peas, salt, and pepper. Cover and cook everything (besides the meat) on high until thickened, which should take approximately 15 minutes.

Remove the turkey from the bone and cut into bite-size pieces. Cover the turkey to keep the meat warm. When the sauce is finished, gently stir the turkey with the sauce. Serve everything over cooked noodles, sprinkled with parsley. ■





# Just Because I Love You Sweetheart Parfait



**T**hese parfaits are a healthy snack or dessert that is perfect for Valentine's Day. Say I love you and serve these Valentine' inspired healthy treats! These parfaits can be made up to 2 days in advance, the recipe serves 4 and is only a 140 calories per serving.

## Ingredients

- ½ teaspoon cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1 ½ cups low-fat or fat free Greek yogurt
- 2 cups fresh or frozen raspberries
- ¼ cup shaved dark chocolate or chocolate chips

## Directions

In medium bowl, whisk together cocoa powder and vanilla.

Add honey and yogurt, and stir until they're well combined with cocoa mixture. It will turn light brown.

Spoon 2 tablespoons of yogurt mixture into the bottom of four clear glasses.

Top with some raspberries and repeat until all of the yogurt and raspberries are used up.

Sprinkle each parfait with chocolate shavings.

Serve or refrigerate until ready to serve. ■

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## Heart Healthy Chicken Tortilla Soup

(Serves 4-6 people)

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cooking Time: 6-7 hours (in a crock pot)

### Ingredients:

2 chicken breasts  
1 (28oz) can diced tomatoes  
1 (14oz) can black beans  
1 (14oz) can corn  
1 jar salsa (any size)  
1 packet of "taco seasoning"

### Directions

Place all ingredients into a crock pot & mix well.

Put crock-pot on "low" setting for 6-7 hours

When chicken breasts are fully cooked, remove from crock pot & shred it with two forks. Return the shredded chicken back into the crock-pot & mix well.

Serve "as is" for a very healthy low fat dish. Can also be enjoyed over brown rice or with "extras" such as shredded cheddar & tortilla chips ■



## Balsamic Tomato Chicken and Pasta

This recipe is especially for kids with lactose intolerance, who need to limit or avoid dairy products. Your taste buds will really enjoy this flavorful, lactose-free pasta dish. Serve with a side of garlic bread and your favorite vegetable.

Serves: 5

Serving size: 1 cup of sauce with 2/3 cup of cooked pasta.

### Ingredients

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| 18 oz. chicken breast, cut into small pieces (½" square) | 1 tsp. basil        |
| ½ c. onion, diced  | 1 tsp. oregano      |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced                                  | ½ tsp. thyme        |
| 2 cans (14.5 oz.) of diced tomato                        | ½ tsp. rosemary     |
| 1 ½ c. sliced mushrooms                                  | ¼ c. tomato paste   |
| ½ c. balsamic vinegar                                    | cooking spray       |
|  | 3 ½ c. cooked pasta |

### Directions

Spray a large skillet with nonstick cooking spray.

Sauté onion, garlic and mushrooms in large skillet for 5 minutes over low heat.

Add raw chicken pieces to large skillet with onions, garlic, and mushrooms.

Cook chicken over medium high heat until no longer pink.

Once chicken is cooked, add diced tomatoes, tomato paste, balsamic vinegar, and spices to the chicken mixture.

Mix together well and simmer over medium low heat for 20 minutes.

Toss 1 cup of sauce with 2/3 cup of cooked pasta for each serving. ■



## Super Bowl Sunday Spinach Dip & Thyme Pitas



This recipe takes 10 minute to prepare and can be made in advance. After you completed the dip and the pitas are crunchy and cooked, place the cooled pitas in a zip lock bag and store the dip in an air-tight container. This is a great go-to snack that can be kept in the fridge all week too!

### Ingredients

|                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 8 pitas                           | 1 cucumber, sliced      |
| 2 cup fat-free plain Greek yogurt | 2 pinches of salt       |
| 1 cup fresh or frozen spinach     | 1 teaspoon black pepper |

### Directions

Preheat oven to 400° F.

Place yogurt, spinach, cucumber, salt, and pepper into food processor or blender. Process until smooth, about 1 minute.

Place dip into a bowl and refrigerate until chips are done.

Cut pitas into 8 wedges.

Arrange pita wedges on a baking sheet in a single layer.

Spray with cooking spray and sprinkle lightly with garlic powder and thyme.

Bake for 5 minutes or until light golden brown and crispy. ■

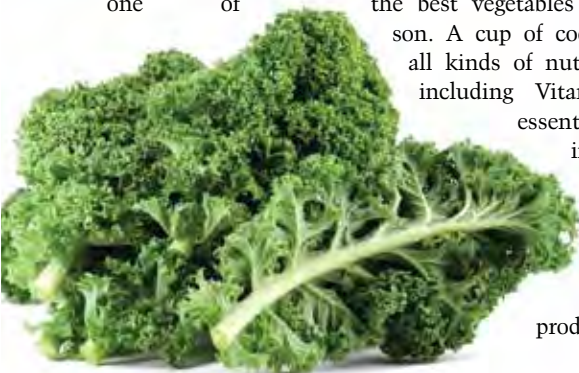
## Maximizing the Benefits of Winter Vegetables

By Brianna Siciliano

The winter temperature seems to be continuously dropping and our bodies are looking for any source of warmth. After a long day of stress, we are all yearning to relax and enjoy a healthy, delicious, warm, home-cooked meal. Sometimes we look for the easy fix for our cravings; if we're looking for a hot meal, we'll batch up a quick, unhealthy option for a snack or for dinner. This is a bad habit that needs to be stopped! A new year has begun, and as the new year is emerging, so are you! This is going to be the best year of your life: you are going to set and achieve new goals, become a happier person, and make healthy decisions. To kick off this fabulous year, stock up on your winter vegetables. Your body will thank you in the long run!

Broccoli is a vegetable that you cannot deprive yourself from this winter! High in nutrients and low in calories, broccoli is one of the best vegetables to enjoy this season.

A cup of cooked broccoli offers all kinds of nutrients to the table, including Vitamin K (which is essential to keep proteins in our blood functioning to prevent blood clotting), Vitamin A (helps with vision and red blood cell production), Vitamin C



(forms body tissue and bones, and helps wounds and cuts heal), potassium (needed for nerve function and heart contraction), folate (needed for maintenance and production of new cells in the body), and fiber (which can help lower cholesterol). Adding and keeping broccoli to your diet is something you will never regret.

Kale is an incredibly healthy and hardy veggie that can be enjoyed raw or cooked. The colder the kale leaves are stored, the sweeter the flavor. Packed with vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, fiber, and cancer-fighting phytonutrients, kale is the best green antioxidant filled veggie. Lucky for us, winter is kale's peak season. When shopping for kale, choose stalks that have firm, deep-green leaves. If you have never tried kale yet, beware! This vegetable might change your outlook on greens forever (for the better!).

Winter would not be the same without winter squash. Squash was introduced to my family two years ago when we were first introduced to the tasty flavors of butternut squash and spaghetti squash. Butternut squash—which is filled with calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, zinc, iron, and vitamins A, C, E, K—is often recommended by dietitians for people who are looking to reduce their weight and/or control their cholesterol. Spaghetti squash, on the other hand, is loaded with riboflavin, folate, thiamin, and vitamins A, B-6, C, K. When cooking and eating your squash, make sure you enjoy the nutrient-filled seeds!

Adding these delicious vegetables to your menu will spark motivation to help you begin—or continue—your journey to better health. ■



# Keeping Safe from Winter Hazards

By Brianna Siciliano

Colder nights, snow and ice, and dark skies are all a package deal when winter sets in. The winter can be a very dangerous time for seniors because of the higher risk of injuries and health problems, including frostbite, hypothermia, and falls in snow and ice. We have all heard the saying, 'It's better to be safe than sorry,' and in the winter time, this phrase is very important to live by. It is much better for your health to take precautions throughout the winter than to rush yourself no matter what you are doing, whether you are getting the mail from your mailbox or walking up a few outdoor (or even indoor) stairs.

Frostbite is something to take seriously; if you notice that your skin feels numb, hard, or waxy, or if you notice that your skin is becoming white, gray-ish, or ashy, get out of the cold weather right away and place your frostbitten body parts in warm (warm, not hot!) water. Extremely cold temperatures that our skin is exposed to can cause damage to the skin, and sometimes that damage can hurt our bones! Frostbite usually affects your cheeks, nose, ears, chin, fingers, and toes, and in severe cases, frostbite can take a toll on your limbs. To prevent frostbite, cover up every part of your body when you know you will be exposing your fragile skin to frigid temperatures!

Hypothermia, which can be caused by frostbite, is not uncommon for older adults. Older adults tend to produce less body heat than younger people, resulting in confusion of knowing when their body temperature is too low. If you notice that you (or someone you are with) is shivering, feeling tired, confused, weak, and/or sleepy, has problems walking, is breathing slower, or has a lower heart rate, call 911. It is important to not rule out the diagnosis of hypothermia if

an older person is not shivering, because sometimes older people tend to shiver less (or not at all) when their body temperature drops. To prevent hypothermia, keep indoor temperatures at 65 degrees or higher, stay indoors (if possible) when it's very windy and/or cold outside, wear layers of loose clothing when exposing yourself to the freezing temperatures outside, and avoid wearing wet clothing. (Wet clothes chills your body quicker, so stay dry!)

Falling in the winter is very dangerous, especially in snowy and icy conditions. The importance of carefully walking in the winter time cannot be stressed enough! Having someone shovel your steps, walkways, and driveway is a great winter investment (I wouldn't suggest shoveling yourself because of the injuries that can happen to your body). Sure, it might cost you \$20, but wouldn't you rather spend \$20 and be safe than fall and hurt yourself? Another tip for preventing falls is to wear boots with non-skid soles because wearing these shoes lowers your risk of slipping while walking. Overall, if you are looking for the most important tip for staying away from falls, walk very, very slowly and cautiously outdoors. Winter precipitation is very sneaky!

Being cautious is something you will never forget, so keep away from hazards like frostbite, hypothermia, and falls. Enjoy your safe, happy, and healthy winter. ■





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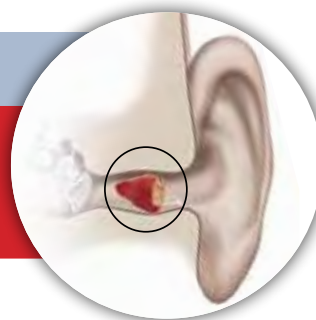


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## Long Term Care Options

By Susan Heckler

**W**ith the improvements in medical care and nutrition, our longevity is increasing. Parents and Grandparents are aging and unable to live without assistance. Whereas previous generations took their aging parents in to live with them, the lifestyle today may not be conducive with couples depending on two wages and less home-bound routines.

You have a few options available without turning your home and life upside down. According to the National Care Planning Council, long-term care services may be provided in any of the following settings:

- In the home of the recipient
- In the home of a family member or friend of the recipient
- At an adult day-services location
- In an assisted living facility or board-and-care home
- In a hospice facility
- In a nursing home

When a person requires someone else to help with physical or emotional needs over an extended period of time, this is long-term care. The need for long-term care help may be due to a terminal condition, disability, illness, injury or the frailty of old age. Estimates by experts are that at least 60% of all individuals will need extended help in one or more of the areas above during their lifetime. The need for long-term care may only last for a few weeks or months, or it may go on for years. It all depends on the underlying reasons for needing care.

Temporary long-term care (need for care for only weeks or months) would be for rehabilitation from a hospital stay, recovery from illness, injury or surgery or a terminal medical condition.

Ongoing long-term care (need for care for many months or years) may be needed with a chronic medical condition, chronic severe pain, permanent disabilities, dementia, ongoing need for help with activities of daily living and the need for supervision.

When considering the options available to those who are no longer capable of independent living, it is critical to evaluate options in order from least to most restrictive after consideration is given to the person's physical and cognitive limitations. Family members should seek the advice of their physicians or a qualified geriatric care manager to help determine where the loved one is best placed.

An assisted living facility is a "home away from home" designed to provide custodial care in a setting that resembles a personal residence rather than a medical facility. Some assisted living facilities offer secured living areas to prevent the wandering that often accompanies certain types of dementia. In most cases, residents of assisted living facilities maintain a higher functional capacity than those of long-term nursing care facilities.

A long-term nursing care facility (nursing home) is designed to provide intermediate advanced custodial care as well as skilled care to those whose needs are beyond simple custodial care. It may be unsafe and inappropriate for a person to remain in an assisted living facility if more than general custodial care is needed. ■

## Do You Trust Your Gut?

By Brianna Siciliano

**W**e have all grown up with the saying, "trust your gut instinct," but how do we know if our gut instincts are the instincts they should be? Do your instincts help you make wise choices quickly? Quicker than your friends and family members' perhaps? Find out how trustworthy your gut instincts are, and learn more about your personality, by taking the 'Do you trust your gut?' quiz on aarp.org.

The quiz is quick, simple, and to the point, starting off with the question, "I get a diagnosis that doesn't seem quite right." There are three choices to answer this question; will you get a second opinion, obsess over webmd.com, or trust the doctor because doctors know best?

Follow-up questions/situations include:

1. When I follow my gut, I regret it.
2. I take the same route to work everyday, but today something seems off. So I...
3. I argue against a popular decision when I feel it's not right.
4. A great idea for a TV show comes to mind. What should I do?

After taking the quiz, your total score will reveal that you either have no guts and no glory, you sometimes listen to your gut, or that you have all the guts and all the glory. You will learn a lot more about your personality and instincts once the results are in. Involve yourself in the activity by visiting <http://lifereimagined.aarp.org/quiz/20831/> right now! ■

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## Live Your Perfect Life with 'The Good Life Inventory'

By Brianna Siciliano

Everyone wants to live the best life possible: we all want to live in the right place, have relationships with the right people, and do all the right work. We want to achieve all of our dreams—whether they are in or out of reach in the moment—and we want to live everyday to the fullest, making all of our goals and dreams reality. But how can we achieve the perfect life if we do not know what we truly want?

There is a week long well-being program that can be found online to help you discover what you truly want in life, and how you can live your life with a clear purpose. Each day of the week, you will receive an email with one to two tasks to help you move forward in achieving the best life you can live. The program consists of taking a quick and simple quiz to take inventory on every part of your life, growing and reflecting on every relationship in your life, finding out if the work you are pursuing is working for you, and in the end you will great your 'Good Life' purpose statement.

By the end of the 'Good Life' program, the program says that you will have a full understanding of what your perfect life should look like, and you will have already started your journey to making your perfect life a reality.

How can you make this perfect life possible? By logging onto <http://lifereimagined.aarp.org/challenge/19881-good-life-inventory/> and clicking on the blue 'Let's Get Started' button. From there, you can either sign yourself up on the website, or sign in through your Facebook account, making the process quicker and easier. After signing up, find out what your 'Good Life' score is by answering the quick, simple activity that is designed to help you take the appropriate steps towards your perfect life. The program promises that if you follow it everyday for seven days, before you know it, you will be living a life full of happiness and excitement! ■

## Winter Activities for Retirees

By Brianna Siciliano

Keeping your mind busy after retiring is very important. Sometimes it can be a challenge to find entertaining activities to keep yourself preoccupied day by day, but luckily, creativity can keep your calendar packed with loads of fun things to do! There are many indoor activities to give a try, and who knows? Maybe you'll fall in love with a certain activity and want to pursue it for the rest of your life! Try something new this winter—make it your new year resolution to discover a new passion—and see what comes out of it!



A great way to keep busy is by taking a class, whether the class be a cooking class, an art class, an exercise class, or even a few college classes! Nothing is unreachable or unrealistic, so dream big and follow your dreams! You have all the time in the world to dedicate to people and activities, so why not spend your time doing things you're interested in? Why not pursue your dancing passion with new friends in a local zumba class, or pursue your baking passion with new friends you'll meet at a cooking class? There are so many available class options in our area, so find a class that's perfect for you!

An idea that many of us find corny is participating in a book club, but in reality, being a part of a book club might be a fun idea! As a member of a book club, you have the opportunity to read books, spark conversations, and create and embrace friendships. Book clubs are wonderful for people who have a passion for reading, especially for people who are willing to read new genres of books. You might walk into the book club as romance lover and grow to love mystery, fantasy, and science fiction books. Who knows? Giving book clubs a chance might be a great way to pass time!

If you are looking for ways to volunteer your time to help others, ask around and see what you can do to help people, animals, and businesses in your community. Are you an animal lover? Actively volunteering at a nearby animal shelter will not only benefit you, but animals, too! Being a volunteer is something that everyone should do at least once in their life!

As a retiree, you have the opportunity to do anything that you'd like to pursue! Fill up your calendar and give things like learning a new sport, taking a class, joining a book club, volunteering your time, spending time with your children, grandchildren, friends, family, or participating in weekly events like breakfast with the men (or women) a chance. You won't regret it, I promise! ■



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