

# Healthy Living Newsletter

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*Live, Take Charge, Change*

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## Backpack Safety

- Choose a backpack with wide, padded shoulder straps and a padded back.
- Pack light. Organize the backpack to use all of the compartments. Pack heavier items closer to the center of the back. The backpack should never weigh more than 10 to 20 percent of the student's body weight.
- Always use both shoulder straps. Slinging a backpack over one shoulder can strain muscles and may increase curvature of the spine.
- Consider a rolling backpack. Remember that rolling backpacks still must be carried up stairs.

*Source: www.aap.org*

## Fitness Tip

### Good Morning –

Make it a habit to start every day with pushups and crunches. Simply roll out of bed, then stand up and reach your arms overhead towards the ceiling to get the blood flowing. Drop down and do a moderate number of pushups. If your best ever is 40 pushups, go for 20. Follow up with crunches for your abdominals. This is a great way to jump-start your day.

*Source: www.activelifestyle.info*



## School Bus Safety

For many children, August marks the beginning of a new school year and a return to riding the school bus. Unfortunately, each year many children are injured and some are killed in school bus accidents.

Parents are encouraged to teach their children these rules for getting on and off the school bus:

- When waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic and avoid roughhousing or other behavior that can lead to carelessness.
- Line up away from the street or road as the school bus approaches.
- Wait until the bus has stopped and the door opens before stepping onto the roadway.
- Use the hand rail when stepping on and off the bus.
- Loud talking or other noises can distract the bus driver and is not allowed.
- Keep aisles clear – books or bags are tripping hazards and can block the aisle in an emergency.
- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk at least 10 feet ahead of the bus along the side of the road, until you can turn around and see the driver.
- Wait for a signal from the driver before beginning to cross.
- When the driver signals, walk across the road, keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes.
- Do not cross the center line of the road until the driver has signaled that it is safe for you to begin walking.

*Source: www.nsc.org*

## Children & Fire

Children playing with fire cause hundreds of deaths, and thousands of injuries each year. Preschoolers are most likely to start these fires, typically by playing with matches and lighters, and often they are the ones most likely to perish in them.

Here are some tips to follow:

- Store matches and lighters out of children's reach and sight, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Never use lighters or matches as a source of amusement for children; they may imitate you.
- If your child expresses curiosity about fire and has been playing with fire, calmly but firmly explain that matches and lighters are tools for adults only.
- Teach young children to tell an adult if they see matches or lighters, and teach school age children to bring any matches or lighters to an adult.
- Never leave matches or lighters in a bedroom or any other place where children may go without supervision.

*Source: www.nfpa.org*



## Safety Before a Tropical Storm or Hurricane

Hurricanes and tropical storms generally can be tracked days ahead of any impact, providing ample time to prepare in case of evacuation. However, their intensity, speed, and direction of motion can quickly change.

The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June through November; it is important to pay attention to any significant storms building in the Atlantic through summer and fall.

There are four key alerts that are issued that relate specifically to tropical storms and hurricanes:

- **Tropical Storm Watch** – Tropical storm conditions (sustained winds from 36 to 73 mph) are possible in your area for the next 36 hours.
- **Topical Storm Warning** – Tropical storm conditions are expected in your area within the next 24 hours.
- **Hurricane Watch** – Hurricane conditions (sustained winds greater than 74 mph) are possible in the specified area of the watch, usually within 36 hours.
- **Hurricane Warning** – Hurricane conditions are expected in the area of the warning, usually within 24 hours.

Source: [www.beta.weather.com/](http://www.beta.weather.com/) & [www.redcross.org/](http://www.redcross.org/)

## Office Exercise 101

**Take Fitness Breaks** – Rather than hanging out in the lounge with coffee or a snack, take a brisk walk or do gentle stretching. Pull your chin toward your chest until you feel a stretch along the back of your neck, or slowly bring your shoulders up toward your ears.

Source: [www.mayoclinoc.com](http://www.mayoclinoc.com)

## How do you prepare a Personal Evacuation Plan?

- Identify ahead of time where you could go if you are told to evacuate. Choose several places – a friend’s home in another town, a motel, or a shelter.
- Keep the telephone numbers of these places handy, as well as a road map of your location. You may need to take alternative or unfamiliar routes if major roads are closed or clogged.
- Listen to a weather radio, local radio or television stations for evacuation instructions. If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Take these items with you when evacuating:
  - o Bottled water, battery-operated radio and extra batteries, first aid kit, flashlight.
  - o Documents, which should include a driver’s license, social security card, proof of residence, insurance policies, wills, deeds, birth and marriage certificates, tax records, etc.
  - o Prescription medications and medical supplies.
  - o Bedding and clothing, including sleeping bags and pillows.
  - o Car keys and maps.

Source: [www.beta.weather.com](http://www.beta.weather.com)



## Injections - How to make them easier for your child

Most babies and toddlers receive up to 20 shots by their second birthday and kids with health conditions such as allergies, asthma or diabetes have far more experiences with needles and doctors.

Perhaps the most important thing you can do when infants get shots is to stay calm and collected. Although babies can not talk, they do sense fear and anxiety, especially in their parents. If you feel yourself becoming anxious, take deep breaths and relax your muscles.

Other strategies include:

- Bring a familiar and soothing object. Your baby’s favorite stuffed animal or blanket will serve as a comforting distraction.
- Hold and talk to your child during the shot. Comfort your baby with hugs and caresses. Your voice also helps your baby feel secure, so softly sing a familiar song or whisper reassuring words.
- Offer a pacifier or bottle.

Once children can talk, you can explain how shots protect them. Because shots hurt, children often assume they are harmful or even a form of punishment. Make sure your child understands that needles are the only way to get certain medicine inside the body to prevent illness. Never let your child talk his or her way out of getting a shot.

Source: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

## What's Your Food IQ?

Which has the most fiber?

- Slice of whole-wheat bread
- Cup of strawberries
- Cucumber
- Two rice cakes

**Answer: b.)** A cup of strawberries has four grams of fiber, double the fiber in a slice of bread or in a cucumber, and more than rice cakes, which only have half a gram at most. Other high fiber winners include pears, a cup of blueberries, and a medium sized baked potato, skin on. All have four grams of fiber each. Most people consume on average about 11 grams of fiber daily – about half the total most experts suggest.

Source: [www.cookinglight.com](http://www.cookinglight.com)



### Food Serving Sizes

Most people do not have a device for measuring exact amounts, so they need approximations of a serving size. There are a few ways to approximate your serving sizes:

- 1 cup (8 fl oz) is 2/3 of a can of soda (12 fl oz).
- 1 cup of food is about a large handful or two ice cream scoops.
- 1 tbsp is the size of the tip of your thumb (from the crease to the tip).
- 1 tsp is the size of the tip of your pinky finger (from the crease to the tip).

The following are some examples of a serving size:

- Beef, lean 1 ½ ounces
- Chicken 2 ½ ounces
- Egg 1 large
- Cashews 4 whole
- Peanuts 8 whole
- Blueberries ¾ cup

[www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

## Ten Great Health Foods For Eating Well

These ten health foods are some of the healthiest because they meet at least three of the following criteria:

1. They are a good or excellent source of fiber, vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients.
2. They are high in phytonutrients and antioxidant compounds, such as vitamins A and E and beta carotene.
3. They may help reduce the risk of heart disease and other health conditions.
4. They are low in calorie density, meaning you get a larger portion size with a fewer number of calories.

These health foods include:

**Almonds** – These nuts are packed with nutrients – fiber, riboflavin, magnesium, iron, and calcium. Almonds have more calcium than any other nut – 75 (mg) in one serving.

**Apples** – Apples are an excellent source of pectin, a soluble fiber that can lower blood cholesterol and glucose levels. Fresh apples are also good sources of vitamin C – an antioxidant that protects your body's cells from damage. Vitamin C also helps form connective tissue collagen, keeps capillaries and blood vessels healthy, and aids in the absorption of iron.

**Blueberries** – Blueberries are a rich source of phytonutrients. As with cranberries, phytonutrients in blueberries may help prevent urinary tract infections. Blueberries may also improve short term memory and promote healthy aging. Blueberries are also a low-calorie source of fiber and vitamin C.

**Broccoli** – Besides being a good source of calcium, potassium, folate, and fiber, broccoli contains phytonutrients, broccoli is also a good source of vitamins A and C.

**Red beans** – Red beans are a good source of iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, copper, and thiamin. They are also an excellent low-fat, low-calorie source of protein and dietary fiber.

**Salmon** – Salmon is an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids – a type of fat that makes your blood less likely to form clots that may cause heart attacks. Omega-3's may also decrease the growth of artery-clogging plaques, lower blood pressure, and reduce the risk of stroke.

**Spinach** – Spinach is high in vitamins A and C and folate. It is also a good source of riboflavin, vitamin B-6, calcium, iron, and magnesium. The plant compounds in spinach may boost your immune system and may help keep your hair and skin healthy.

**Sweet potatoes** – The deep orange-yellow color of sweet potatoes tells you they are high in beta carotene. Food sources of beta carotene, which are converted to vitamin A in your body, may help slow the aging process and reduce the risks of some cancers. Sweet potatoes also are a good source of fiber, vitamins B-6, C, and E, folate, and potassium. They also are fat-free and relatively low in calories – one sweet potato has just 54 calories.

**Vegetable juice** – Vegetable juice has most of the vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients found in other vegetables, and is an easy way to include vegetables in your diet. Tomato juice and vegetable juices that include tomatoes are good sources of lycopene, an antioxidant that may reduce the risk of heart attack, prostate cancer, and possibly other types of cancer.

**Wheat germ** – Wheat germ is a highly concentrated source of nutrients, including niacin, thiamin, riboflavin, vitamin E, folate, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, iron, and zinc. The germ also contains protein, fiber, and some fat.

Source: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)



### Tip for Relaxing

#### Have you heard the phrase “take 5?”

Set aside 5 to 10 minutes to have “only you” time. The best time is the first thing in the morning. Wake up a little bit earlier than the rest of the house and enjoy your patio or front porch for a few minutes, alone.

### Iron-Rich Foods

To boost the amount of iron in your diet, try these foods:

- Red meat
- Egg yolks
- Dark, leafy greens, including spinach and collards
- Dried fruit, including prunes, raisins, apricots, and peaches
- Iron-enriched cereals and grains (check the labels)
- Mollusks, including oysters, clams, and scallops
- Turkey and chicken giblets
- Beans and nuts, including peanut butter, almonds, peas, lentils, and white, red, and baked beans
- Liver
- Artichokes

Sources: [webmd.com](http://webmd.com) & [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

### Recommended Dietary Allowances for Iron

#### Males :

- 14 – 18 years (11mg/day)
- 19 – 50 years (08 mg/day)
- 51+ years (08 mg/day)

#### Females:

- 14 – 18 years (15 mg/day)
- 19 – 50 years (18 mg/day)
- 51+ years (08 mg/day)

Source: [ods.od.nih.gov](http://ods.od.nih.gov)



## Ways to Think More Clearly

1. **Time it right** – Most older people think more clearly in the morning; most younger people in the afternoon. Figure out your own best “thinking time” and reserve it for your most challenging brain work.
2. **Get a good education...but don’t overdo it** – Schooling has a positive impact on creativity up through the final year of college.
3. **Go for the high octane** – Research shows that the amount of caffeine in a cup of coffee actually can help you concentrate.
4. **Practice, practice, practice** – Learning, repeating, and practicing new skills appears to change the brain’s internal organization. A well-practiced older individual many times will be faster than an unpracticed younger individual.
5. **Give your ideas a chance** – Many of us are rewarded for our abilities to quickly evaluate facts and make a quick “go or no-go” decision. Creativity demands a much more leisurely approach.
6. **Pay attention** – Do you sometimes find yourself forgetting a person’s name seconds after meeting them? The problem is not memory; it is concentration. As we age, we must consciously remind ourselves to put information into our memory banks.
7. **Exercise the body to improve the mind** – An increasing number of researchers now believe aerobic workouts can increase everything from school performance to nerve conduction velocity. Suspected mechanisms: increased oxygen and nutrients supplied to the brain, plus a boost in natural compounds called neurotrophins, which promote brain cell growth.
8. **Try something new** – In a study that compared creative people who burn out with those who continue to create, the chief difference was that the latter were constantly exposing themselves to new knowledge, in the process giving themselves a fresh start.

Source: [yourtotalhealth.ivillage.com](http://yourtotalhealth.ivillage.com)

## Iron in Your Diet

Iron, one of the most abundant metals on Earth, is essential to most life forms and to normal human physiology. Iron is an integral part of many proteins and enzymes that maintain good health. In humans, it is an essential component of proteins involved in oxygen transportation. It is also essential for the regulation of cell growth and differentiation. A deficiency of iron limits oxygen delivery to cells, resulting in fatigue, poor work performance, and decreased immunity. On the other hand, excess amounts of iron can result in toxicity and even death.

Almost two-thirds of the iron in the body is found in hemoglobin, the protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen to tissues. Smaller amounts of iron are found in myoglobin, a protein that helps supply oxygen to muscle, and in enzymes that assist biochemical reactions. Iron is also found in proteins that store iron for future needs and that transport iron in blood. Iron stores are regulated by intestinal iron absorption.

There are two forms of dietary iron: heme and nonheme. Heme iron is derived from hemoglobin and is found in red meats, fish, and poultry. Iron in plant foods such as lentils and beans is arranged in a chemical structure called nonheme iron. This is the form of iron added to iron-enriched and iron-fortified foods. Heme iron is absorbed better than nonheme iron, but most dietary iron is nonheme iron.

Source: [ods.od.nih.gov](http://ods.od.nih.gov)