

Healthy Living Newsletter

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Live, Take Charge, Change

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Binge Drinking

It is defined as drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion (i.e., within a few hours) on at least one day in the past 30 days.

This is an increasing problem with children as early as 12 years old and through college age.

Source: ncadi.samhsa.gov

Life Expectancy by Country



Women outlive men in all but nine of 221 countries where life expectancy statistics for both sexes are available. In those countries where men outlive women, the gap is very narrow. In 145 of 212 countries where women outlive men, the gap exceeds four years, and exceeds 10 years in six of these. Worldwide, women live 3.9 years longer than men.

United States

- Men – 75.3 years
- Women – 81.1 years

(Data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, International Database, 2007 estimates)

Source: www.menshealthlibrary.com



Alcohol Awareness

Alcohol depresses the central nervous system. In some people, the initial reaction may be stimulation. But, as you continue to drink, you become sedated. Alcohol lowers your inhibitions and affects your thoughts, emotions, and judgment. In significant amounts, alcohol impairs speech and muscle coordination. Too much alcohol can severely depress the vital centers of the brain. A heavy drinking binge may even cause a life-threatening coma.

Over time, excessive alcohol can lead to other severe health effects:

- **Liver disorders.** Heavy drinking can cause alcoholic hepatitis, an inflammation of the liver. Hepatitis may lead to cirrhosis, the irreversible and progressive destruction and scarring of liver tissue.
- **Gastrointestinal problems.** Alcohol can result in inflammation of the lining of the stomach (gastritis) and interfere with the absorption of the B vitamins – particularly folic acid and thiamin – and other nutrients. Heavy drinking can also damage your pancreas.
- **Cardiovascular problems.** Excessive drinking can lead to high blood pressure and damage to your heart muscle (cardiomyopathy).
- **Diabetes complications.** Alcohol prevents the release of glucose from the liver and increases the risk of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).
- **Sexual function and menstruation.** Alcohol abuse can cause erectile dysfunction in men. In women, it can interrupt menstruation.
- **Birth defects.** Alcohol use during pregnancy may cause fetal alcohol syndrome. This condition results in birth defects, including a small head, heart defects, a shortening of the eyelids, and various other abnormalities.
- **Bone loss.** Alcohol may interfere with the production of new bones. This can lead to thinning bones and an increased risk of fractures.
- **Increased risk of cancer.** Chronic alcohol abuse has been linked to a higher risk of cancer of the esophagus, larynx, liver, and colon.

Other complications of alcoholism and alcohol abuse may include:

- Domestic abuse and divorce
- Poor performance at work or school
- Increased likelihood of motor vehicle fatalities and arrest for drunk driving
- Higher incidence of suicide and murder

Source: www.mayoclinic.com

Think about it... Are those extra drinks really worth the risk?



Carcinogens

Carcinogens are substances that can cause changes that can lead to cancer. Some carcinogens do not act on DNA directly. They lead to cancer in other ways, such as causing cells to divide at a higher rate, which could increase the chances that DNA changes will occur.

Carcinogens do not cause cancer in every case. Substances classified as carcinogens may have different levels of cancer causing potential. Some may cause cancer only after prolonged, high levels of exposure.

The list of known and known to be human carcinogens is extensive. The following are some of the more recognizable ones:

- Asbestos
- Tobacco products
- Oral tobacco products
- Radon
- Ultraviolet A, B & C Radiation
- Formaldehyde
- Coal tars
- Mineral oils
- Vinyl chloride
- Diesel engine exhaust
- Wood dust

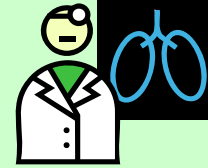
Source: www.cancer.org



Steps to a Healthier You

- Dried fruits make a great snack. They are easy to carry and store well. Because they are dried, a ¼ cup is equal to ½ cup of other fruits.
- Sauces or seasonings can add calories, fat, and sodium to vegetables. Use the Nutrition Facts label to compare the calories and % Daily Value for fat and sodium in plain and seasoned vegetables.

Source: *UPS Wellness Guide – Road Map To Health*



Cancer Facts and Figures

What are the costs of cancer The National Institutes of Health estimate overall costs for cancer in 2006 at \$206.3 billion; \$78.2 billion for direct medical costs (total of all health expenditures); \$17.9 billion for indirect morbidity (cost of lost productivity due to illness); and \$110.2 billion for indirect mortality costs (cost of lost productivity due to premature death).

New cases of cancer in the United States in 2007:

- Childhood Cancer – (10,400) *(for ages 0 – 14 years)
- Leukemia – (44,240)
- Lung and Bronchus – (213,380)
- Lymphoma – (71,380)
- Oral Cavity and Pharynx – (34,360)
- Ovary – (22,430)
- Pancreas – (37,170)
- Prostrate – (218,890)
- Skin – (1,000,000)
- Urinary Bladder – (67,160)
- Uterine Cervix – (11,150)

Source: *Cancer Facts & Figures 2007 (American Cancer Society)*



Cancer Screening Guidelines

For individuals undergoing periodic health examinations, a cancer-related checkup should include health counseling and, depending on a person's age and gender, examinations for cancers of the thyroid, oral cavity, skin, lymph nodes, testes, and ovaries, as well as for some nonmalignant diseases.

Breast

- Yearly mammograms are recommended starting at age 40.
- Clinical breast exams should be part of a periodic health exam about every three years for women in their 20s and 30s, and every year for women 40 and older.

Colon & Rectum

Beginning at age 50, men and women should begin screening with one of the examination schedules listed:

- A fecal occult blood test (FOBT) or fecal immuno-chemical (FIT) every year.
- A flexible sigmoidoscopy (FSIG) every 5 years.
- Annual FOBT or flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years.
- A double-contrast barium enema every 5 years.
- A colonoscopy every 10 years.

Source: *Cancer Facts & Figures 2007, American Cancer Society.*



Who is the Weaker Sex?

- 115 males are conceived for every 100 females.
- The male fetus is at greater risk of miscarriage and stillbirth.
- 25 percent more newborn males die than females.
- Three out of five SIDS victims are boys.
- Men suffer hearing loss at two times the rate of women.
- Testosterone is linked to elevations of LDL, the bad cholesterol, and declines in HDL, the good cholesterol.
- Men have fewer infection fighting T-cells and are thought to have weaker immune systems than women.
- By the age of 100, women outnumber men eight to one.

Source: www.menshealthnetwork.org



Childproofing Your Kitchen

Under-sink cabinet

- ❖ Use a safety lock if you store cleaning products here. Better: Store them in a high cabinet, with a safety lock.

Sink

- ❖ Turn down your home's hot-water heater to 120 degree F.

Fire extinguisher

- ❖ Keep a UL-approved multipurpose one nearby.

Small appliances

- ❖ Keep them away from counter edges.
- ❖ Roll extra cord lengths and tie with a big rubber band.

Source: www.parenting.com

Hidden Hazards – Why Kids Are at Risk

Children are at risk from hidden hazards due to their curiosity, tendency to put things in their mouths, and their size. Lack of supervision increases the risk for some of these hazards. Here are some of the most common hidden hazards:

- **Bunk Beds** – Children are injured due to falls, entrapment in guard rails, and suffocation due to falling mattresses or foundations.
 - Teach children that rough play is unsafe around the beds, and that only one child should be on the top at a time.
 - Any spaces between the guardrails and the bed frame should be less than 3.5 inches, and guardrails should extend at least 5 inches above the mattress to keep kids from rolling off.
- **Lawn Mowers**
 - Make sure that children are at a safe distance from the area you plan to mow. Be aware of where children are at all times, especially when mowing in reverse.
 - Clear the mowing area of any objects such as twigs, stones, and toys that could be picked up and thrown by the lawn mower blades.
- **Pool Drains** – The strong suction caused by drains can cause serious injury or drowning when hair or body parts become trapped.
 - Install multiple drains in all pools, spas, whirlpools, and hot tubs. This minimizes the suction of any one drain, reducing the risk of death or injury.
 - Regularly check to make sure drain covers are secure and have no cracks. Replace flat drain covers with dome-shaped ones.
 - Know where the manual cut-off switch for the pump is in case of emergency.
- **Shopping Cart Injury** – Children can suffer cuts, bruises, fractures, concussions, and even internal injuries when they jump or fall from a shopping cart, the cart overturns, they get pinched in the folding mechanism or they fall against or are hit by a cart.
 - Always use a harness or safety belt to restrain children in shopping cart seats.
 - Stay close to the cart at all times.
- **Trunk Entrapment** – Unintentional entrapments typically occur during children's games of exploration or while retrieving items from the trunk.
 - Never leave your child unattended in a car, even with the windows down.
 - Always lock your car door and trunk, and keep keys out of children's sight and reach.
 - Contact your auto dealership about getting your vehicle retrofitted with a trunk release mechanism.

Source: www.usa.safekids.org

Heart Factoids

- **100,000** – Daily heartbeats
- **5 quarts** of blood are pumped each minute
- **2,000 gallons** of blood are pumped each day
- **50 to 99** times a minute is how often a normal heart beats at rest
- **325,000** people a year die of coronary heart disease without being hospitalized or admitted to an emergency room

Source: *American Heart Association*



Myths & Facts About Cataracts

MYTH: Only older Americans develop cataracts

FACT: While cataracts affect nearly 20.5 million Americans over 40 years and older, cataracts can occur among young adults or children. Risks that may lead to getting cataracts at a younger age include:

- Intense heat or long-term exposure to UV rays from the sun
- Certain diseases, such as diabetes
- Long-term steroid use
- Events before birth, such as German measles in the mother

MYTH: Taking Vitamin E or Vitamin C can prevent cataracts

FACT: Some research centers are studying the link between these vitamins and cataract prevention. However, it will be many years before studies are completed. Until then, it's best not to take these vitamins in large doses unless they have been prescribed by your physician.

Source: www.preventblindness.org



The Truth About Bone Fractures

- A **complete fracture** is when the bone has broken into two pieces.
- A **greenstick fracture** is when the bone cracks on one side only, not all the way through.
- A **hairline fracture** is a thin break in the bone.
- A **comminuted (say: kah-muh-noot-ed) fracture** is when the bone is broken into more than two pieces or crushed.
- A **bowing fracture**, which only happens in kids, is when the bone bends, but doesn't break.

Source: www.healthfinder.gov

Foot Health Facts & Fiction

The following are some informative facts and fiction on foot health:

1. The human foot contains within its relatively small size 26 bones (the two feet contain a quarter of all the bones in the body), 33 joints, and a network of more than 100 tendons, muscles, ligaments, to say nothing of the blood vessels and nerves.
2. A 150 lb person walking just one mile exerts a force of 63.5 tons on a single foot.
3. If you get up during the night, turn on a light. Many fractured toes and other foot injuries occur while attempting to find one's way on the dark.
4. Shop for shoes late in the day. Feet tend to swell during the day, and its best to be fitted while they are in that state.
5. *"It can't be broken, because I can move it."* False. This widespread idea has kept many fractures from receiving proper treatment. The truth is that often you can walk on certain kinds of fractures. (Examples: breaks in the smaller, outer bone of the lower leg, small chip fractures of either the foot or ankle bones, and the often neglected fracture of the toe.
6. *"Applying an elastic bandage to a severely sprained ankle is adequate treatment."* False. Ankle sprains often mean torn or severely overstretched ligaments and they should receive immediate care. X-ray examination, immobilization by casting or splinting, and physiotherapy may be indicated.
7. *"If you have a foot or ankle injury, soak in hot water immediately."* False. Don't use heat or hot water on an area suspect for fracture, sprain, or dislocation. Heat promotes blood flow, causing greater swelling. An ice bag wrapped in a towel has a contracting effect on blood vessels, produces a numbing sensation and prevents swelling and pain.

Source: www.apma.org/

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Prevention

There are no proven strategies to prevent carpal tunnel syndrome. To protect your hands from a variety of ailments, take the following precautions:

- **Reduce your force and relax your grip.** Most people use more force than needed to perform many tasks involving the hands. If your work involves a cash register, for instance, hit the keys softly. For prolonged handwriting, use a big pen with an oversized, soft grip adapter and free-flowing ink.
- **Take frequent breaks.** Every 15 to 20 minutes, give your hands and wrists a break by gently stretching and bending them. Alternate tasks when possible. If you use equipment that vibrates or that requires you to exert a great amount of force, remember to take breaks.
- **Watch your form.** Avoid bending your wrist all the way up or down. A relaxed middle position is best. If you use a keyboard a lot, adjust the height of your chair so that your forearms are level with your keyboard and you don't have to flex your wrists to type.
- **Improve your posture.** Incorrect posture can cause your shoulders to roll forward. When your shoulders are in this position, your neck and shoulder muscles are shortened, compressing nerves in your neck. This can affect your wrists, fingers, and hands.
- **Don't work with your arms too close or too far from your body.**
- **Keep your hands warm.** If you can not control the temperature at work, put on fingerless gloves that keep your hands and wrists warm.

Sources: www.mayoclinic.com, www.ninds.nih.gov & familydoctor.org