

Healthy Living Newsletter

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Live, Take Charge, Change

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Allergy Facts

- Eight foods account for 90 percent of all food-allergic reactions in the U.S.: milk, eggs, tree nuts (e.g., walnuts, almonds, cashews, pistachios, pecans), wheat soy, fish, and shellfish.
- The incidence of food allergy is highest in young children – one in 17 among those under age 3.
- There is no cure for food allergies. Strict avoidance of food allergens and early recognition and management of allergic reactions to food are important measures to prevent serious health consequences.

Sources: www.foodallergy.org

Fighting Diabetes With Diet

The American Diabetes Association recommends the following general tips for making healthful food choices:

- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables in a variety of color.
- Include dried beans and lentils in your meals.
- Try to eat two to three servings of fish each week.
- Choose lean cuts of beef or pork that end in “loin,” such as sirloin or tenderloin.
- Cook with liquid oils rather than solid fats.



Food Allergies

A food allergy is an immune system response to a food that the body mistakenly believes is harmful. Once the immune system decides that a particular food is harmful, it creates specific antibodies to it. The next time the individual eats that food, the immune system releases massive amounts of chemicals, including histamine, to protect the body. These chemicals trigger a cascade of allergic systems that affect the respiratory system, gastrointestinal tract, skin, and/or cardiovascular system. Scientists estimate that approximately 12 million Americans, or four percent of the population, have food allergies.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following: a tingling sensation in the mouth, swelling of the tongue and throat, difficulty breathing, hives, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, drop in blood pressure, loss of consciousness, and even death. Symptoms typically appear within minutes to two hours after the person has eaten the food to which he or she is allergic.

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a sudden, severe allergic reaction that occurs when you are exposed to a substance that your body was sensitized to during a previous exposure.

In some cases, anaphylaxis is mild, causing only hives and itching. But, it can be deadly. In anaphylactic shock, blood pressure drops severely; water rapidly leaves the blood stream, causing severe swelling; and bronchial tissues swell dramatically. This causes the person to choke and collapse. Anaphylactic shock is fatal if not treated immediately.

Sources: www.webmed.com & www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus

Diabetes Facts and Figures

- Nearly 21 million adults and children in the United States are living with diabetes and another 54 million are at-risk.
- Worldwide over 246 million people have diabetes. By 2020, that number is expected to rise to 380 million.
- The national cost of diabetes in the U.S. in 2007 exceeded \$174 billion. This estimate includes \$116 billion in excess medical expenditures attributed to diabetes, as well as \$58 billion in reduced national productivity.
- People with diagnosed diabetes, on average, have medical expenditures that are 2.3 times higher than the expenditures would be in absence of diabetes. Approximately one in 10 health care dollars is attributed to diabetes.
- Indirect costs include increased factors such as absenteeism, reduced productivity, and lost productive capacity due to early mortality.

Source: www.diabetes.org

Family Caregivers References

These are references and contacts to help family caregivers:

Care Givers Library
www.caregiverslibrary.org

National Family Caregiver Support Program
www.aoa.gov/prof/aoaprogram/caregiver

National Family Caregivers Association
www.nfcacares.org

National Adult Day Services Association, Inc
www.nadsa.org

Well Spouse Association
www.wellspouse.org

Alzheimer's Association
www.alz.org

Caring From a Distance
www.cfad.org

Womenshealth.gov – Caregiver Stress
www.4woman.gov

Eldercare Locator

This is a public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging. It is the first step in finding resources for older adults in any U.S. community. They can be contacted by calling toll-free at 1-800-677-1116 weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (ET) or going to:

www.eldercare.gov/Eldercare/Public/Home.asp



Whole Grains A to Z

Millet

Millet is rarely served to humans in the United States. Yet, it is the leading staple grain in India, and it is commonly eaten in China, South America, Russia, and the Himalayas.

Millet has a mild flavor and is often mixed with other grains or toasted before eating, to bring out the full extent of its delicate flavor.

Source: www.wholegraincouncil.org



Family Caregivers

As the population ages, many will find themselves in the position of caregiver for an aging parent or other family member. To be able to better care for your loved one longer, you need to care for yourself. The following are some tips to help you accomplish this:

- Be wise – immunize.
 - Flu vaccine: The CDC recommends that caregivers of the elderly get one each year.
 - Pneumococcal vaccination: For most caregivers, one will last a lifetime.
 - Tetanus booster: Get one every 10 years.
- Don't neglect your health.
 - Get a yearly check up and the recommended cancer screenings (mammogram, cervical screening, etc.).
 - Tell your doctor that you are a caregiver.
 - Tell your doctor if you feel depressed or nervous.
- Prioritize, make lists, and establish a daily routine.
- Take some time each day to do something for yourself - read, listen to music, telephone friends, or exercise. Social activities can help you feel connected and may reduce stress.
- Eat a healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low in saturated fats. Do not skip meals.
- Find time to exercise most days of the week.
- Find caregiver resources in your area early.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help. And don't do it all yourself. Use your family, friends, or neighbors for support.

Sources: www.4woman.gov & U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging

Arthritis

In 2007, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Arthritis Data Workgroup released a study affirming that one in five adults – 46 million people – have arthritis - the nation's most common cause of disability. By the year 2030, an estimated 67 million people will be affected by arthritis, according to the study.

Other key findings include:

- Rheumatoid arthritis, which can lead to chronic pain, loss of joint function, and deformity, is decreasing, with 1.3 million adults affected. This is due to more restrictive classification and a reduction in prevalence.
- Gout, a form of arthritis most common among men, affected approximately three million adults - up from 2.1 million in 1990.
- Osteoarthritis had increased to 27 million people - up from the previous estimate of 21 million.

Source: www.cdc.gov/arthritis

Activities for People With Alzheimer's

People with Alzheimer's disease should be kept busy - both mentally and physically.

The National Institute on Aging says building on current skills generally works better than trying to learn something new. The agency offers these suggestions:

- Keep activities simple and at the person's level.
- Offer more support as the person gets started and break the activity into small steps.
- Do not push any activity if you notice the person getting agitated.
- If the person enjoys certain activities, try to make them part of a daily routine.
- Have the person assist in the entire routine. At mealtime, for instance, have the person help set the table, make the food, and clean up afterward.

Source: health.discovery.com

Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea is a serious, potentially life threatening condition. It causes pauses in breathing during sleep and robs it's sufferers of the good, quality sleep needed to be fully alert during the rest of the day. It often goes unrecognized and untreated. If left untreated, sleep apnea increases one's risk of high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, and other medical conditions.

Sleep apnea occurs in all age groups and both sexes. There are a number of factors that may put you at higher risk:

- A family history of sleep apnea.
- Being overweight.
- A large neck size (17 inches or greater for men, 16 inches or greater for women).
- Large tonsils
- Deviated septum
- Enlarged tongue
- Nasal congestion or blockage

Sources: www.fmcsa.dot.gov, & www.sleepfoundation.org



Alzheimer's

Alzheimer's is a progressive, degenerative disease of the brain. Symptom's of the disease include:

- Memory loss that affects the person's short-term memory. A difficulty doing familiar activities such as operating a television remote, stove, or microwave
- Misplacing things
- Poor or decreased judgment
- Language deterioration, with difficulty finding the right words
- Disorientation to time and place
- Changes in mood, including depression
- Hallucinations
- Personality changes, including agitation and irritability
- Impaired ability to orient the body to the surrounding space
- A loss of interest in activities that were previously pleasurable

There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease. There are several options available that may slow down the onset of the disease or the progression of the symptoms.

Source: health.discovery.com



Thanksgiving Safety Tips

- **Fresh or Frozen** – If you choose to buy a frozen bird you may do so at any time, but make sure that you have adequate storage space in your freezer. If you buy a fresh turkey, be sure to purchase it only one – two days before cooking.
- **Thawing** – Thawing the turkey completely before cooking is important and necessary to reduce the risk of food borne illness. If the turkey is not properly thawed, the outside of the turkey will be done before the inside, and the inside will not be hot enough to destroy disease-causing bacteria.
- **Doneness** – To check a turkey for doneness, insert a food thermometer into the inner thigh area near the breast of the turkey, but not touching bone. The turkey is done when the temperature reaches a minimum 165 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Storing Leftovers** – Cut the turkey into small pieces; refrigerate stuffing and turkey separately in shallow containers within two hours of cooking. Use leftover turkey and stuffing within 3-4 days or freeze these foods. Reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165 degrees F or until hot and steaming.
- If you have a question about meat, poultry, or egg products, call the USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline toll free at: **1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854)**. The hotline is open year-round Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Source: www.fsis.usda.gov & U.S. Food and Drug Administration



Office Exercise 101

Get Social.

Organize a lunchtime walking group. You might be surrounded by people who are ready to lace up their walking shoes – and hold each other accountable for regular exercise. Enjoy the camaraderie, and offer encouragement to one another when the going gets tough.

Source: www.mayoclinic.com



Healthy Grocery Shopping Tips

- Set a day and time that you usually go to the market. Limit this to no more than once a week.
- Shop in the same market. This way you are familiar with the layout and can shop more quickly.
- Keep in mind that the healthiest items are around the sides of the market – fresh fruit and vegetables, dairy, meats, poultry, and cheeses.
- Use the Nutrition Facts label on foods that have them to check out whether the food should be in your basket or be left on the shelf.

Source: www.diabetes.org

Mental Fitness Tip

Step outside the chatter in your mind

Do yoga or take a walk and train your mind to take a break. As you are walking, turn off your cell phone and stop that mental to-do list. Give your brain a rest and a solution you have been seeking may pop into your mind afterward.

Lung Cancer

This is the second most diagnosed cancer in men and women (after prostate and breast cancer), but it is the number one cause of death from cancer each year. Because lung cancer can take years to develop, it is mostly found in older people. The average age of a person receiving a lung cancer diagnosis is 69 years.

Doctors can not always explain why one person develops lung cancer and another does not. It is known that a person with certain risk factors may be more likely than others to develop lung cancer. These risk factors include:

- **Tobacco smoke:** Tobacco smoke causes most cases of lung cancer. It is by far the most important risk factor.
- **Asbestos and other substances:** Exposure to asbestos, arsenic, chromium, nickel, soot, tar, and other substances can cause lung cancer. The risk is highest for those with years of exposure.
- **Air pollution:** Air pollution may slightly increase the risk of lung cancer. The risk from air pollution is higher for smokers.
- **Family history of lung cancer:** People with a father, mother, brother, or sister who had lung cancer may be at a slightly increased risk of the disease, even if they do not smoke.
- **Personal history of lung cancer:** People who have had lung cancer are at increased risk of developing a second lung tumor.

Sources: www.cancer.gov, www.lungcancer.org & www.lungcanceralliance.org



Do You Need A Bone Mineral Density Test?

Most women should undergo a bone mineral density (BMD) test at age 65, although physicians frequently recommend the test at menopause or even earlier if a woman has risk factors that might make her vulnerable to a fracture, or she has experienced a fracture in recent years. The test also is recommended for men, but not until age 65 or 70.

There are a number of ways to measure bone density. The most accurate way is through dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry (DEXA). This completely painless test is typically offered at the same types of imaging centers that perform standard X-rays and mammograms. Women often can undergo the test at the same time and location as their standard mammogram. The approach uses two X-rays beams to essentially measure the density of the minerals, such as calcium in the spine and the hip.

The results of a DEXA test are presented as T scores:

- If your score is between 0 and 1, your BMD is considered normal.
- If your score is between -1 and -2.5, you have osteopenia or low bone mass, although researchers believe your risk of fracture depends on a number of factors, not just your BMD. Your physician may recommend treatment and/or lifestyle changes.
- If you score is -2.5 or below, you have osteoporosis. Your physician will probably recommend lifestyle changes to strengthen your bones as well as treatment options. This can include a number of drug therapies that help to preserve and build bone mass.

Source: [National Osteoporosis Foundation](http://NationalOsteoporosisFoundation.org)