

Vitality[®]

NOVEMBER 2019 | GOOD NEWS ABOUT
HEALTH, HAPPINESS, AND PRODUCTIVITY

Proven Ways to Kick the Habit

If you are a smoker, you likely know that it's time to quit. Although kicking the habit is challenging, it is possible. You just need a plan.

UNDERSTAND YOUR 'WHY'

Write down why you want to quit. The sooner you stop smoking, the sooner your body can heal. You lower your risk for disease and improve your ability to exercise. You also save money.

CHOOSE A QUIT DATE

Pick a specific date to quit and tell others. Leading up to your date, prepare. Explore support services or medication and get rid of ashtrays and lighters.

ANTICIPATE TRIGGERS

Consider what events or situations trigger you to smoke. Then plan ways to manage them. For example, if you usually smoke after eating, take a walk instead. Or if you light up with the same friends, get together at places where smoking isn't allowed.

DON'T TRADE ONE HABIT FOR ANOTHER

You may be tempted to try e-cigarettes—also known as vaping—to help you quit smoking. But studies show they are not safe. E-cigarettes contain nicotine and several toxic chemicals that can lead to lung damage, cancer, and heart disease. Opt for other support services.



(health bits)

*Low back pain got you down?
You might want to try yoga.*

Researchers looked at 12 studies of more than 1,000 men and women with nonspecific low back pain and found that yoga classes improved back function and reduced symptoms of low back pain more effectively than no exercise.

Let's face it: Work can be hectic. Sometimes we don't stop to come up for air.

But over time, this can take a toll. For every stressor, try to have a recovery of some kind. Have a tough meeting? Take a walk outside afterward or sip a cup of tea slowly.

Restaurant meals are convenient, but they can easily promote overeating.

To keep your portions manageable, skip the basket of bread or chips, stick to the smaller sized meal when offered an option, or have two healthy appetizers rather than an entrée.

Carbs Count

WHEN CONTROLLING DIABETES



MANAGING DIABETES REQUIRES MAKING SMART CHOICES about what you eat and drink. Counting carbohydrates (“carbs”) is one way to do that.

To count carbs, add up all the carbs you consume. Work with your diabetes care team to create a target range for meals and snacks. Staying within that goal helps manage your blood sugar levels, which cuts your risk for heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, and circulation and vision problems. If you take insulin, it may also help you decide how much to take.

WHY EVERY CARB COUNTS

When consumed, carbs turn into blood sugar, so carb-rich foods affect your blood sugar levels more than others. Foods and beverages that contain carbs include:

- Breads and rice
- Starchy vegetables
- Fruits
- Legumes
- Dairy products
- Sweets
- Sugary drinks

The amount of carbs you need depends on your weight, activity level, and diabetes medications. A professional can help set your goal.

LOOK AT THE LABEL

To count carbs, read the food label to determine how many servings you’re consuming and how many carbs are in each serving. Adjust your meal if needed.

Although it may take time to learn how to count carbs, the payoff is worth it.



Low
Sugar

(recipe)

Chocolate Peppermint Meringue Cookies

- 2 large egg whites
- ½ tsp. white vinegar
- ¼ tsp. cream of tartar
- 1 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp. honey
- ¼ tsp. peppermint extract
- ¼ tsp. vanilla extract
- ½ tsp. decorative white sugar

Line two large cookie sheets with silicone liner or parchment paper and preheat oven to 250 degrees. In a large glass or metal bowl, use an electric mixer fitted with a balloon whisk attachment to whisk egg whites, vinegar, and cream of tartar on high speed for about two minutes or until soft peaks start to form. Add cocoa powder and continue to whisk on high for one minute. Then add honey, peppermint extract, and vanilla extract and continue whisking on high until shiny, hard peaks form. (Hard peaks hold their shape when you turn the mixer attachment upside down.) Scoop mixture into a pastry bag fitted with a star attachment or into a plastic bag in which the corner has been cut off. Hold your hand steady and squeeze mixture onto cookie sheet for one or two seconds, just enough to create stars the size of quarters. Sprinkle decorative sugar onto stars. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, then let cool for one hour.

Serves nine or 10. A serving is 10 cookies. Each serving provides about 19 calories, 0 g total fat (0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 11 mg sodium, 4 g carbohydrates, 0 g fiber, 4 g sugar, and 1 g protein.

How to Help Someone Having a Seizure

Know what to do if someone you know has a seizure.

Do:



- ✓ Stay with the person until the seizure is over
- ✓ Remain calm
- ✓ Help them sit or lie down
- ✓ Place a soft object under their head (if they're lying down)
- ✓ Turn them on their side (if they're lying down)
- ✓ Move sharp objects out of the way
- ✓ Time the seizure



Don't:

- ✗ Hold them down or stop their movements
- ✗ Put anything in their mouth
- ✗ Attempt CPR
- ✗ Give them food or water



Call 911 If:

- The seizure lasts more than five minutes
- The person has trouble breathing after the seizure
- The person appears injured
- They ask for medical help

(health bits)

Obesity is a major risk factor for heart disease, but only about half of those at risk consider it a health hazard. That was just one of the eye-opening findings of a study of more than 3,000 patients published in the journal *Obesity*. Another? More than 70 percent of study participants do not discuss weight loss with a doctor because they consider it their responsibility alone. For your heart's sake, if you are overweight, talk with your primary care physician about ways to address the problem.

Depression affects roughly 15.7 million adults in the United States. While medication can help, especially for severe depression, there are other forms of evidence-based treatment you may consider either alone or in combination with medication, like cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). CBT helps people identify the negative thoughts and behavior patterns that reinforce their depression, then change those beliefs and behaviors in ways that ease their symptoms.

Women: Take Care of Your Heart at Every Age

WHEN YOU THINK OF A HEART ATTACK VICTIM, it's likely you picture an older man. The reality, however, is that heart disease is the most common cause of death among women. And new research in the journal *Circulation* finds that women in the U.S. younger than age 55 are suffering heart attacks at a higher rate today compared with 20 years ago.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

The reason for the increase isn't known. Researchers suggest that rising rates of high blood pressure and diabetes among this population likely play a role.

Despite the news, you can safeguard your ticker at any age with a few simple steps:

- Eat a healthy diet. Limit sodium and saturated and trans fats. Choose fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, legumes, fish, and low-fat dairy products.
- Get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity weekly and do strength exercises two or more days.
- Don't smoke; quit smoking if you do.

Also, visit your health care provider regularly for wellness exams.

WOMEN'S WARNING SIGNS

Heart attack symptoms vary between women and men. For instance, in addition to chest pain, women are more likely to experience at least one of these other symptoms:

- Shortness of breath
- Back or jaw pain
- Nausea and vomiting

- Heavy pressure on the chest
- Cold sweats (unrelated to menopause)
- Dizziness
- Sudden fatigue

If you notice any of these heart attack signs, call 911 and get to an emergency room right away.



(test your savvy on ... *hospice*)

1. Hospice is a model of care that focuses on providing physical and emotional comfort to people in the last stages of incurable disease. TRUE FALSE
2. An interdisciplinary team delivers hospice care. TRUE FALSE
3. Patients only receive hospice care in their own homes. TRUE FALSE
4. Hospice care is covered by Medicare, Medicaid (in most states), the Department of Veterans Affairs, and most private insurance plans. TRUE FALSE

1. True. Hospice also supports patients' families during the end-of-life period.
2. True. This team can include doctors, nurses, home health aides, counselors, social workers, religious or spiritual leaders, and volunteers.
3. False. Though many people choose to receive care in their homes, hospice care can also be provided in settings such as long-term care facilities, hospice facilities, and hospitals.
4. True. If you must pay out of pocket for hospice care, see if you're eligible for financial assistance. Donations, community contributions, and memorial funds allow many hospice providers to offer services at a reduced cost or no cost to families in financial need.

ANSWERS

DISPOSABLE vs. CLOTH DIAPERS:

The Straight Poop

DISPOSABLE DIAPERS MAKE UP MORE THAN 1.5 PERCENT OF ALL THE TRASH IN THIS COUNTRY. About 3.4 million tons of them end up in our landfills each year. So, are cloth diapers a better choice?

That's up to you! There are environmental costs to using both disposable and cloth diapers. Plus, there are differences in how well the diapers work. Here's what you need to know to make an informed choice, both for your baby and for the world your baby will grow up in.

DISPOSABLE DIAPERS

Today's disposable diapers are marvels of engineering. They're thinner and fit better than older versions. They also keep your baby drier, thanks to superabsorbent materials. Studies show that disposables may reduce diaper rash, compared with cloth diapers.

In the past, some items used to make disposable diapers raised health concerns. At this point, however, such substances have largely been replaced with safer materials. For example, latex, which can trigger allergies, has been replaced with spandex.

On the downside, those mountains of discarded diapers grow taller every day. Some companies have created more biodegradable diapers. But if the diapers end up in landfills (as most do), they may still take a long time to break down under the conditions there.

CLOTH DIAPERS

The alternative is cloth diapers. Because they're reusable, they're cheaper over the long haul. Another plus: If you're worried about the chemicals used in disposables, cloth diapers offer a more

natural option. But keep in mind that they're not environmentally neutral. Whether you wash them yourself or use a diaper service, it takes a lot of water and energy resources to keep a clean supply on hand.

Compared with disposables, cloth diapers are more prone to leaks. To help prevent blowouts, consider using a diaper cover, which goes over a cloth diaper for extra protection.

If buying organic is important to you, organic cotton diapers are available. To make cleanups easier, you can buy flushable liners to put inside the diapers. Then when it's time to change a dirty diaper, simply flush away the messy liner.

The truth is, there's no perfect solution to the diaper dilemma. But armed with information, you can sniff out the best diaper for your baby.



GET TO THE BOTTOM OF DIAPER RASH

Whether you're Team Disposable or Team Cloth, healthy diapering habits are crucial. For video tips, go to www.aad.org and search for "Diaper Rash: How to Treat."

Thinking About Using CBD?

Get the Facts

You may have noticed that CBD is popping up for sale everywhere these days, from coffee shops and yoga studios to pharmacies and vape shops. It comes in many forms, including edibles, topical ointments, oils, extracts, infusions, and capsules. Thinking about trying one of these popular new products? Here's what you should know.

WHAT IS CBD?

CBD is a type of cannabinoid, derived from the marijuana plant. However, unlike THC—another common cannabinoid—CBD doesn't make you "high." While the drug is not intoxicating, it may be beneficial for a host of health conditions, including pain and inflammation, anxiety, arthritis, and epileptic seizures.

IS CBD APPROVED BY THE FDA?

To date, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved only one drug made with CBD. Its brand name is Epidiolex, and it's used to treat seizures caused by two rare forms of childhood epilepsy. Currently, CBD is not approved for any other use. Although some companies tout the use of CBD for other medical or therapeutic purposes, the FDA warns that these uses have not yet been proved safe or effective.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS?

Some recent animal studies have shown that CBD and other cannabinoids may slow the growth or reduce the size of some types of cancer cells. Scientists are also researching the use of these substances to treat other conditions, including:

- Pain and inflammation
- HIV/AIDS
- Multiple sclerosis (MS)
- Seizures
- Substance use disorders
- Mental health issues

More research is needed to see if CBD might be beneficial for people with these conditions, and to assess the overall safety of using CBD.

WHAT IF I WANT TO TRY CBD?

It's best to talk with your health care provider before using CBD. If you do try it, be careful about the product you choose. Because CBD is not regulated by the FDA, the amount of CBD can vary widely from product to product and is not always labeled accurately. It's a good idea to contact the manufacturer and ask for a third-party analysis for potency and purity. If you live in a state that has legalized medical marijuana, it may be safer to buy from a dispensary that caters to medicinal users.



4 Ways to Improve Your Workout *and* the Environment at the Same Time

THE ENVIRONMENT IS PROBABLY THE LAST THING ON YOUR MIND WHEN HITTING THE TREADMILL. BUT YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE—even with your workout. Small changes to your exercise routine can help you get a better workout while going green at the same time. It's a win-win.

As if the endorphins weren't enough, these changes will leave you feeling even better after a sweat session.

1. GET OUTSIDE

Take your workout outdoors—and help keep it clean at the same time. Volunteer for park or beach cleanups in your area. You'll get your body moving in ways that may be different from your typical workout routine, spend time outside, and help the environment. You can find park cleanup programs and Adopt-a-Beach programs at:

- www.volunteer.gov
- www.nps.gov (National Park Service)
- Your local parks and recreation department



2. WALK MORE

Walking, running, and biking are great workouts with a small carbon footprint. If you typically drive to the gym, leaving your car at home can increase your activity time while decreasing your impact on the planet. Try walking, running, or riding your bike to the gym.

If you need to drive to the gym, use these tips to make the trip a little greener:

- Carpool with friends
- Complete other errands near your gym instead of making multiple trips
- Take public transportation



3. RECYCLE YOUR GEAR

Having the right gear can help keep your body safe while exercising. That means replacing running shoes, yoga mats, and other items when they wear out. Getting rid of old gym shoes isn't just good for your feet—it can be good for the earth, too. Instead of tossing old workout products, find programs that resell, donate, or recycle them. For example, www.planetaid.org and www.nike.org tell you where to take old shoes, www.yogafoster.org/mat-drive is a good place to find locations to donate old yoga mats, and www.pickupplease.org collects various sports equipment.



4. REUSE YOUR WATER BOTTLE

Drinking enough water is an important part of any workout. But to stay hydrated and reduce waste at the same time, ditch the plastic bottle. Each week, Americans buy enough plastic water bottles to circle the earth five times. Get into the habit of carrying a reusable water bottle with you. That way, you'll always have water on hand, making it easy to stay hydrated without the extra waste.



(health bits)

Even if the warning signs of a stroke go away on their own, take them seriously. Symptoms that disappear might be a sign of a transient ischemic attack (TIA), or ministroke. About a third of all people with a TIA have a stroke within the next year. So if you or someone you know experiences difficulty speaking, hindered movement, or sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm, or leg, particularly on one side of the body, seek medical help immediately.

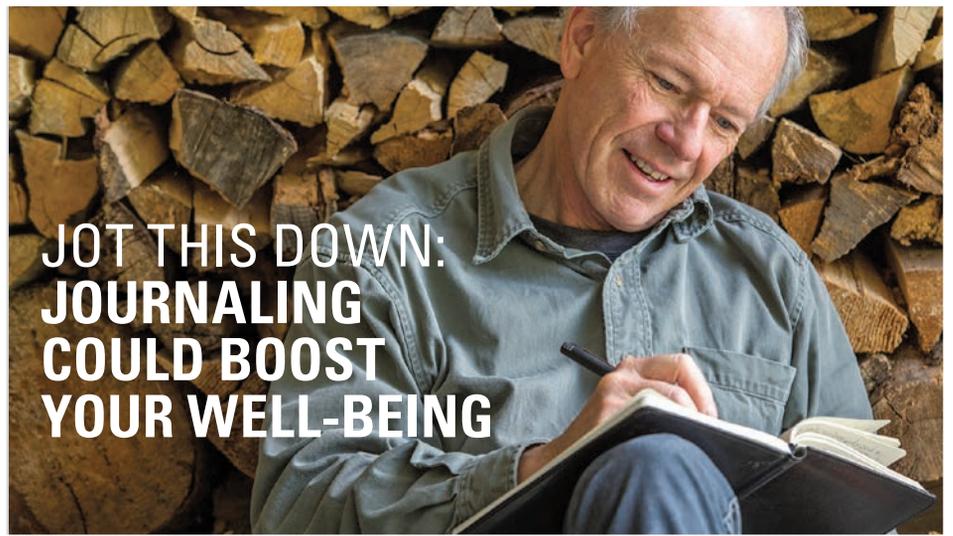
For people older than age 50, working out benefits the mind as much as the body.

An analysis in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* found that exercise improves cognitive function in older adults. A combination of both cardio and strength training for 45 to 60 minutes and at a moderate intensity seems to be most effective.

Getting an annual flu vaccine is a good idea,

particularly for the very young or old, but did you know that the time of day you get your shot can make a big difference in its effectiveness?

Vaccines given in the morning produce a greater response in the body's flu antibody production than shots given in the afternoon or evening. Schedule your flu vaccine appointment for earlier in the day to get a boost in your body's defenses.



JOT THIS DOWN: JOURNALING COULD BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING

FOR BETTER HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, YOU ALREADY KNOW THE BASICS: Eat well, exercise, drink lots of water, and get plenty of sleep. But there's something else that can yield major benefits: journaling. Research shows that regularly writing down what's on your mind can help you release emotions and make sense of what's going on in your life. It can also help improve your relationships with others, lower your blood pressure, and decrease symptoms of depression.

CHOOSE THE 'WRITE' WAY

There are many ways to go about journaling. You could write about your thoughts and feelings. Or you could use your journal to help with problem-solving. Try breaking down a big problem that you're facing into smaller, more manageable parts that you can tackle one at a time to make it less overwhelming.

You could also list things that you're grateful for. Studies show that shifting your focus from gripes to gratitude can help

lower stress, improve your mood, boost the quality of your sleep, and even reduce inflammation.

PUT PEN TO PAPER

Journaling can protect your health in surprising ways. People with diabetes are often told to log their food intake and activities, but writing about your feelings helps, too. When you have diabetes, your blood sugar may spike during times of stress. By journaling, you can identify what's triggering your stress and then address it.

There's no right way to start journaling. The key is finding what works best for you. To make journaling a part of your daily routine, try linking it with an already established habit. For example, after brushing your teeth in the morning or in the evening, take a few minutes to write in your journal. Over time, writing will become as automatic—and beneficial—as reaching for your toothbrush.