

HealthConnection

GOOD NEIGHBOR PHARMACY

Issue 5 • Healthy Skin

May 2017



THIS MONTH'S Featured Article

SPOTTING MELANOMA: DO YOU KNOW YOUR ABCDE'S?

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Healthy Eating

Eat More, Weigh Less?

Have you tried to lose weight by cutting down the amount of food you eat? Do you still feel hungry and not satisfied after eating? If so, you are not alone. Many people throw in the towel on weight loss because they feel deprived and hungry when they eat less. But there is another way. You can cut calories without eating less-nutritious food. The key is to eat foods that will fill you up without eating a large number of calories.

Research shows that people get full from the amount of food they eat, not the number of calories they take in. You can cut calories by lowering the amount of fat and/or increasing the amount of fiber-rich ingredients, such as vegetables or fruit.

Let's take macaroni and cheese as an example. A recipe that uses whole milk, butter and full-fat cheese has about

540 calories per 1-cup serving. Here's how to make it with fewer calories and less fat:

- Use 2 cups nonfat milk instead of 2 cups whole milk.
- Use 8 ounces light cream cheese instead of 2 1/4 cups full-fat cheddar cheese.
- Use 1 tablespoon butter instead of 2 or use 2 tablespoons of soft trans-fat-free margarine.
- Add about 2 cups of fresh spinach and 1 cup diced tomatoes (or any other veggie you like).

Voila! Your mac and cheese now has about 315 calories per 1-cup serving. Try this approach with other recipes and lighten up while still feeling satisfied.

— Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Senior Health Update Want to Enjoy Life More? Stretch

To get all of the benefits of physical activity, you need all four types of exercise: endurance, strength, balance and flexibility. Stretching, or flexibility, exercises are an important part of a physical-activity program, especially as you get older. They give you more freedom of movement for your physical activities and for everyday activities such as getting dressed and reaching objects on a shelf. **Note:** Stretching exercises can improve your flexibility but will not improve your endurance or strength.

You'll want to talk with your doctor before starting any exercise plan. Your doctor may give you a handout showing recommended stretches, or suggest a local stretching class.

As you begin stretching, slowly stretch into the desired position, as far as possible without pain, and hold the stretch for 10 to 30 seconds. Relax, breathe, then repeat, trying to stretch farther. You can progress in your stretching exercises. For example, as you become more flexible, try reaching farther, but not so far that it hurts.

Source: National Institutes of Health

For additional articles on this topic, visit www.mygnp.com.





Spotting Melanoma

Do You Know Your ABCDE's

Melanoma is one type of skin cancer. By doing a simple skin self-exam every month, you can improve your chances of finding a melanoma early. In addition to doing routine skin self-exams, you should have your skin checked regularly by your primary-care doctor or a dermatologist. If your primary-care doctor finds something suspicious, you will be referred to a dermatologist.

Some melanomas do not fit the rules described in this article. It is important to tell your doctor about any changes or new spots on your skin. You should also tell your doctor about any growths that look different than the rest of your moles.

When you do your monthly skin self-exam, look for spots with any of the following:

- **(A) Asymmetry:** One half of the area does not match the other half.
- **(B) Border:** The edges are uneven or ragged.
- **(C) Color:** The color is not the same all over and there may be more than one shade or color present.
- **(D) Diameter:** The size is larger than a pencil eraser (6 millimeters).
- **(E) Evolving:** The mole is changing in size, shape or color.

How to Check Your Skin

After a bath or shower, stand in front of a full-length mirror in a well-lit room. Use a handheld mirror to look at areas that are hard to see.

1. Begin with the face and scalp and work downward. Look at the front and back of your body in the mirror, then raise your arms and check your right and left sides.
2. With your elbows bent, look carefully at your forearms, underarms, fingernails and palms of your hands.
3. Check the backs of your legs, the top and bottom of your feet, toenails and between your toes.
4. Next, using a hand mirror, look at the back of your neck and scalp. Carefully check your scalp by parting your hair.
5. Finally, use a hand mirror and check your back, groin and buttocks.

By checking your skin regularly, you will know what is normal for you.

It is helpful to record the dates of your skin exams, and to write notes about the way your skin looks. If you find anything unusual, see your doctor right away.

Source: The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

To-Do List

Is Your Family Ready for an Emergency?

It's important to create and practice an emergency plan so your family will know what to do in a crisis.

With your family and any other household members, discuss how to prepare and respond to the types of emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work and play. These can include earthquake, flood, hurricane, tornado, severe winter storm, etc. Of course, events such as a house fire can happen anywhere.

Identify responsibilities for each member of your household and talk about how you will work together as a team. Who will turn off the gas in case of a serious earthquake? If there is a house fire, how will you exit your home? Where will you meet outside? For other emergencies, how will you contact each other if you are separated? How will you contact family members in other areas to let them know you are safe?

Once you have your plan in place, discuss and practice as many elements of your plan as possible.

Source: American Red Cross



Mom's Corner

Making the Grocery Store Fun (and Educational) for Preschoolers

Chatting with your preschooler or toddler during a trip to the grocery store can make the experience more fun for both of you. And what a great way to teach even little ones about math, language — and kiwi!

Talk with your child as you go through each section of the store:

“This is the dairy section. Can you help me find the milk?” “What is your favorite flavor of yogurt? What would be the silliest flavor you can think of for yogurt?”

“Now we’re in the produce section. Let’s pick out three lemons. What do lemons smell like? Let’s find out! We can weigh the lemons. Let’s put them on the scale and see how much three lemons weigh.”

“It’s cold in this section of the store. Why do you think some foods have to be kept cold and others don’t? What do you think might happen to ice cream if it’s left out of the freezer for too long?”

Have fun! Play games. Chat and watch your child’s mind grasp new ideas around every corner.

Source: Florida Department of Health



Kids' Health

EEK! Bedbugs

Think you have bedbugs at home? First, make sure they really are bedbugs and not fleas, ticks or other insects. Google “EPA bedbug identification” to see a photo for comparison. Then...

- **Don't panic.** It can be difficult to eliminate bedbugs, but it's not impossible. Don't throw out all of your bedding, etc, because most items can be treated and saved.
- **Wash and heat-dry your bedsheets, blankets, bedspreads and any clothing that touches the floor.** Bedbugs and their eggs can hide in laundry containers/hampers, too. Remember to clean them regularly.
- **Do-it-yourself freezing may not be a reliable method for bedbug control.** While freezing can kill bedbugs, temperatures must remain very low for a long time. Home freezers may not be cold enough to kill bedbugs. Putting things outside in freezing temperatures could kill bedbugs, but there are many factors that can affect the success of this method.
- **Kill bedbugs with heat, but be careful.** Raising the indoor temperature won't do the job. Special equipment and very high

temperatures are necessary for successful heat treatment. Black plastic bags in the sun might work to kill bedbugs in luggage or small items, if the contents become hot enough. Bedbugs die when their body temperatures reaches 113°F. The room or container must be even hotter to ensure sustained heat reaches the bugs no matter where they are hiding.

- **Vacuum frequently.** Carefully vacuum rugs, floors, upholstered furniture and bed frames and vacuum under beds, around bed legs and around all cracks and crevices. Change the bag after each use, placing it in a tightly sealed plastic bag and in an outside garbage bin.
- **Turn to the professionals, if needed.** Hiring an experienced, responsible pest-control professional can increase your chance of success in getting rid of bedbugs.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

For additional articles on protecting your family from pests, visit www.mygnp.com.



*Your Healthy Pet***Flavoring Pet Medicines**

How many times have you given your cat a pill and thought she swallowed it, only to find the capsule on the floor a few hours later? How many times have you struggled to give your pup medicine and then watched her run off and hide under the bed? Sometimes even offering post-medicine treats doesn't seem to help.

It's hard to blame a pet for not wanting to swallow a pill. Have you ever tried to swallow an aspirin or a vitamin without water? Plus, we humans have a vertical esophagus, whereas an animal's esophagus is almost horizontal, so dogs and cats don't have the benefit of gravity coming to their aid. Because of these challenges, many pets don't swallow their pills and thus don't receive the prescribed amount of the drug for the duration necessary. Owners often throw in the towel because the ordeal is too draining or because the pet won't take the medicine or spits it out.

Adding flavoring to a pet's medication eliminates the need for the pet to dry-swallow a pill. Many veterinarians and pharmacists use a compounding formulary to crush pills or capsules into a fine powder and then mix them with a compounding solution. For bitter-tasting medications for cats, for example, the pharmacist or veterinarian adds a bitterness neutralizer and then mixes in a flavoring that cats like. For dogs, the pharmacist or veterinarian adds a sweetening enhancer to the pet-friendly flavor that has been selected.

If your dog or cat is a "pill hater," the next time he needs to take a medication, ask your veterinarian about a flavoring option.

Sources: North American Veterinary Community; American Animal Hospital Association

*Health Q&A***Sunscreen Tips**

Q: When my family is at the local pool or just playing outside, how much sunscreen should we use and how often should we reapply it?

A: Use enough sunscreen to generously coat all skin that will not be covered by clothing. Most people only apply 25 to 50 percent of the recommended amount of sunscreen. Follow the guideline of "1 ounce, enough to fill a shot glass," which dermatologists consider the amount needed to cover the exposed areas of an adult's body. Adjust the amount of sunscreen for children based on their body size. Apply sunscreen to dry skin 15 minutes before going outdoors. Reapply sunscreen approximately every two hours or after swimming or sweating, according to the directions on the bottle.

The kind of sunscreen you use is a matter of personal choice and may vary depending on the area of the body to be protected. Options include lotions, creams, gels, ointments, wax sticks and sprays. There also are sunscreens made for specific purposes, such as for sensitive skin and for babies.

Skin cancer also can form on the lips. To protect your lips, apply a lip balm that contains sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.

Source: American Academy of Dermatology

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for more information.



Diabetes Update

Diabetes - Alert Dogs Can Help Sniff Out Low Blood Sugar

If you have diabetes, you know you need to be aware of your blood-glucose levels as you go through your day. But does that have to always mean testing your blood?

According to a study published recently in the medical journal *Diabetes Care*, researchers at the Cambridge National Institute of Health Research suspected that dogs are capable of detecting a particular chemical in a person's exhaled breath that might change when glucose levels are low. They were interested in learning what, if any, chemical was responsible for the dogs' reaction. They also reasoned that if researchers know which chemical is raised during low blood glucose, they may be able to develop new detectors for low blood glucose.

The researchers studied eight women ages 41 to 51 with Type 1 diabetes. Participants' breath was collected in a bag while they had normal blood-glucose levels and then again while they had low blood-glucose levels. The breath samples were analyzed to determine which chemicals existed and how much of each chemical was present.

They found that when blood-glucose levels decreased to approximately 50 mg/dL or less, a chemical called isoprene had a major increase. No other chemicals found showed any reaction to changes in blood glucose. These findings suggest that detecting isoprene in the breath may offer an easy alternative to monitoring changes in blood-glucose levels for people with diabetes.

This also likely explains how dogs can be trained to detect, through scent, low blood-glucose levels in their owners. According to Diabetic Alert Dogs of America, the scent associated with isoprene is not detectable by the human nose, but service dogs can be trained to identify the scent and to alert their owner when it's detected.

Sources: American Diabetes Association; *Diabetes Care*; Diabetic Alert Dogs of America





Living with Diabetes

Statins and Diabetes Risk

If you're one of the millions of Americans who take statins to prevent heart disease, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has important safety information for you regarding these cholesterol-lowering medications. Some of the information concerns statins and diabetes.

Regarding diabetes risk, the FDA is advising consumers and doctors that:

People being treated with statins may have an increased risk of raised blood-glucose levels and the development of Type 2 diabetes.

In addition, the FDA wants consumers to be aware that:

- Routine monitoring of liver enzymes in the blood, once considered standard procedure for statin users, is no longer needed. Such monitoring has not been found to be effective in predicting or preventing the rare occurrences of serious liver injury associated with statin use.

- Cognitive (brain-related) impairment, such as memory loss, forgetfulness and confusion, has been reported by some statin users.
- Some medications interact with statins and can increase the risk of muscle damage.

This new information should not scare people off statins, says Amy G. Egan, M.D., M.P.H., deputy director for safety in the FDA's Division of Metabolism and Endocrinology Products. "The value of statins in preventing heart disease has been clearly established," she says. "Their benefit is indisputable, but they need to be taken with care and knowledge of their side effects."

Statins to be aware of include:

- Altoprev (lovastatin extended-release)
- Crestor (rosuvastatin)
- Lescol (fluvastatin)

- Lipitor (atorvastatin)
- Livalo (pitavastatin)
- Mevacor (lovastatin)
- Pravachol (pravastatin)
- Zocor (simvastatin)

Products containing statins in combination with other drugs include:

- Advicor (lovastatin/niacin extended-release)
- Simcor (simvastatin/niacin extended-release)
- Vytorin (simvastatin/ezetimibe)

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

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