

# HealthConnection

GOOD NEIGHBOR PHARMACY

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## THIS MONTH'S Featured Article

**GOT UNNEEDED OR EXPIRED MEDICATIONS?  
YOUR PHARMACIST CAN HELP**

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## Healthy Eating

### Surprisingly Simple Summer Appetizers

When friends are coming over and it's too hot to cook, whip up one of these no-cook appetizers that are sure to please.

#### Watermelon Skewers

Watermelon, goat cheese and basil make for a super simple appetizer. The salty goat cheese complements the sweetness of the melon.

- ¼ large watermelon
- 4 oz. goat cheese
- 1 small package fresh basil leaves
- ½ cup balsamic vinegar
- Cocktail skewers or toothpicks

Cut the watermelon and goat cheese into bite-size cubes. Stack the watermelon and goat cheese on a skewer, placing a piece of basil leaf in between. Drizzle with balsamic-

vinegar reduction. (To make the reduction, pour ½ cup balsamic vinegar into a small saucepan and heat, stirring occasionally, for a few minutes until thickened.) Makes about 25 skewers.

#### Chunky Avocado Dip

- 6 avocados, cut into ½-inch chunks
- 1 can black or pinto beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can corn
- ½ cup diced onion
- 1 cup green salsa
- Salt to taste

Combine ingredients and chill for at least an hour to blend flavors. Serve with baked tortilla chips.

### Senior Health Update Balance Exercises Can Help Prevent Falls

Each year, more than one-third of people age 65 or older fall, according to the National Institutes of Health. Balance exercises, along with certain strength exercises, can help prevent falls by improving your ability to control and maintain your body's position.

These five exercises can help improve your balance and your lower-body strength:

- Standing on one foot
- Walking heel to toe
- Balance walk
- Back leg raises
- Side leg raises

You can do balance exercises almost anytime, anywhere and as often as you like, as long as you have something sturdy nearby to hold onto if you become unsteady. In the beginning, using a chair or the wall for support will help you work on your balance. Keep safety in mind. Talk with your doctor if you are unsure about doing a particular exercise.

Source: National Institutes of Health

For additional articles on this topic, visit [www.mygnp.com](http://www.mygnp.com).





## *Got Unneeded or Expired Medications?* **Your Pharmacist Can Help**

Normally, you take a prescription until the pills are gone. But your doctor may change your dose, switch you to a new medication before you finish the first one or prescribe a few extra pills—and then you may have medication left over. You may also have a medicine cabinet full of expired medication from the past.

It's best not to keep these unneeded or expired medications around the house. Some drugs may be especially harmful if taken by someone other than the person for whom the drug was prescribed. And you don't want to take one of these medications by accident because it is still in your medicine cabinet.

Unused prescription and over-the-counter medication can be especially dangerous to children and pets. Unused pain medication can even be a target for theft. What to do? Fortunately, there are two easy ways to clear such medications out of your home while disposing of them legally and safely.

### **Local Medication Take-Back Programs**

Many community-based drug “take-back” programs offer a helpful option. Take advantage of these programs, which allow the public to take unused drugs to a central location for proper disposal. Call your local law-enforcement agencies to see if they sponsor medicine take-back programs in your community. Contact your city or county

government's household trash and recycling service to learn about medication-disposal options and guidelines for your area.

### **Ask Your Pharmacist**

Your local pharmacy provides medication take-back services as well. Ask your pharmacist for details. Be sure to bring your medications in the original prescription bottle. Some questions you may want to ask:

- Are there certain medications that can't be taken back at the pharmacy, such as certain painkillers?
- May I bring in liquid medications or only pills?
- May I bring in prescription ointments, creams, etc.?

### **Helping the Environment While Keeping Your Family Safe**

Disposing of unwanted medications, through your pharmacy or through a government-sponsored take-back program, is the best way to protect the environment from possible contamination. These disposal options can help alleviate environmental concerns that pop up when people put certain medications in the trash or flush them down the toilet. While some medications are harmless, it's best to be cautious and let the experts do the final sorting and proper disposal.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

### *To-Do List*

## **Beat the (Extreme) Heat!**

What health officials call “extreme heat” occurs when the temperature reaches excessively high levels or when the combination of heat and humidity causes the air to become oppressive. More males than females are generally affected by extreme heat, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with children, older adults, outside workers and people with disabilities being at highest risk.

Heat-related illness can occur in houses with little or no air conditioning, on construction sites and in cars, in particular. During extreme heat, the temperature in your car could quickly become deadly. Avoid heat-related illness with the following tips:

- Stay hydrated with water.
- Stay in an air-conditioned area. If you must be outside, seek shade.
- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing.

Seek medical attention immediately if someone exhibits signs of heat-related illnesses, such as throbbing headache; dizziness; lack of sweating despite the heat; red, hot and dry skin; muscle weakness or cramps; nausea or vomiting; rapid heartbeat, which may be either strong or weak; or rapid, shallow breathing.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## Mom's Corner

### Top Self-Care Tips for New Moms

You're a new mother. Congratulations! You're juggling a lot right now. Here are a few tips that may help:

- **Make rest a priority.**

You may feel like you're devoting most waking (and sleeping) hours to your baby, but try to squeeze in time for yourself. "Sleep when the baby sleeps and take naps during the day," recommends Leyla Sahin, M.D., an obstetrician with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Division of Pediatric and Maternal Health.

- **Watch for signs of postpartum depression.**

If you're feeling constantly very sad, it could be a sign of postpartum depression, Sahin notes. Don't be afraid to be honest with your doctor about how you are feeling. Help is available, and you aren't alone in feeling this way.

- **See your doctor as recommended.**

Sure, you'll be busy scheduling well-baby checkups. But be sure to also schedule and keep your six-week postpartum appointment with your doctor, Sahin recommends. Ask your doctor any questions you may have. (Keep a running list at home to bring along to your appointment.)

Sources: U.S. Food and Drug Administration



## Kids' Health

### Insect Repellent and Kids: What Parents Need to Know

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency advises parents to always read and follow label directions in using any pesticide product, including insect repellents. Because children frequently put their hands in their eyes and mouths, the EPA recommends that all repellent products have the following precautionary statements related to children on their labels and that parents and caregivers follow these warnings:

- Do not allow children to handle the product, and do not apply to children's hands. When using on children, apply to your own hands and then put it on the child.
- After returning indoors, wash your child's treated skin with soap and water or bathe the child. Wash the child's clothing.
- Oil-of-lemon eucalyptus products should not be used on children under the age of three. Other ingredients do not have an age restriction. (Questions often arise

about use of DEET on children. DEET is approved for use on children with no age restriction, according to the EPA.)

- Always store insect repellents safely out of the reach of children.

In addition, when applying insect repellent to your child's skin:

- Read and follow the label directions to ensure proper use. Be sure you understand how much to apply.
- Apply repellents only to the child's exposed skin and/or clothing. Do not use under clothing.
- Do not apply near eyes and mouth, and apply sparingly around ears.
- When using sprays, do not spray directly into face. Spray on hands first and then apply to face.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

For additional articles on protecting your kids' health and safety, visit [www.mynpn.com](http://www.mynpn.com).



*Your Healthy Pet***Well-Pet Visits for Your Pup**

When you take your dog for a wellness visit, the veterinarian will ask you questions about your dog's diet, exercise, thirst, breathing, behavior, habits, elimination patterns (bowel movements and urination), lifestyle and general health.

Your vet will also perform a physical examination. Based on your pet's history and physical exam, the veterinarian will then make recommendations for specific preventive treatments such as vaccinations, parasite control (including preventive treatments for fleas, ticks, intestinal parasites and heartworms), nutrition, skin and coat care, weight management or dental care.

The veterinarian will discuss your pet's individual circumstances and decide whether any particular life-stage or lifestyle recommendations would be appropriate. Puppies and senior dogs have very different

needs, and your vet is here to help take care of your pet's health throughout its life stages.

During the physical exam, the veterinarian will observe how your dog stands; whether she is bright and alert; her general condition; her coat, skin, ears, eyes, mouth and teeth as well as her pulse, lymph nodes, legs and abdomen.

Your veterinarian may recommend that a fresh sample of your pet's bowel movement be examined as part of the wellness examination to check for intestinal parasites. Heartworm testing may also be included.

Now is the time to ask questions and learn how best to care for your dog: What pet food is best? How much exercise does she need? What vaccination schedule should I follow? Your veterinarian is here to help.

Source: VCA Animal Hospitals

*Health Q&A***How Can I Prevent Food Poisoning at Summer Picnics**

**Q:** Our family is planning a picnic for our family reunion. Given the summer heat, how can we avoid food poisoning?

**A:** The goal is to keep your food safe all the way from the fridge to your picnic table:

- **Keep cold food cold.** Place cold food in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs. Meat, poultry and seafood may be packed while still frozen so that they stay colder longer.
- **Organize cooler contents.** Consider packing beverages in one cooler and perishable foods in another. That way, as picnickers open and reopen the beverage cooler to replenish their drinks, the perishable foods won't be exposed to warm outdoor-air temperatures. Once at the picnic site, try to limit the number of times the food cooler is opened.
- **Don't cross-contaminate.** Keep raw meat, poultry and seafood securely wrapped. This keeps their juices from contaminating prepared/cooked foods or foods that will be eaten raw, such as fruits and vegetables.
- **Maintain cleanliness.** Food safety begins with proper hand cleaning, including in outdoor settings. Before you begin setting out your picnic feast, make sure hands and surfaces are clean. If you don't have access to running water, simply use a water jug, some soap and paper towels. Or consider using moist, disposable towelettes for cleaning your hands. Take care to keep all utensils and platters clean when preparing food.

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

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for more information.



Diabetes and Women

# How Does Diabetes Affect Women Differently Than Men?

Diabetes affects women and men in almost equal numbers. However, it affects women differently than men. Compared with men with diabetes, women with diabetes have:

- A higher risk for heart disease, the most common complication of diabetes
- Lower survival rates and a poorer quality of life after a heart attack
- A higher risk for blindness
- A higher risk for depression

Women with diabetes are also at higher risk for:

- Problems getting pregnant
- Problems during pregnancy, including possible health problems for mother and baby
- Repeated urinary and vaginal infections

This doesn't mean women need to be overly worried. Just be smart and aware. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health, you should be tested for diabetes if you are over age 40 and are overweight or obese. (Your doctor may recommend testing earlier than age 40 if you also have other risk factors for diabetes.) Also, talk with your doctor about testing if you are experiencing signs or symptoms that might indicate you have diabetes. Common symptoms include:

- Urinating often
- Feeling very thirsty
- Feeling very hungry even though you are eating
- Extreme fatigue
- Blurry vision

- Cuts/bruises that are slow to heal
- Tingling, pain or numbness in the hands or feet

Your doctor will use a blood test to see if you have diabetes or prediabetes. If testing shows that your blood-sugar levels are high, you can begin making healthy changes to your eating habits and getting more physical activity to help prevent or control diabetes. If additional treatment is needed, your doctor will advise you.

Source: Office on Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; American Diabetes Association





### *Living with Diabetes*

## Meet Your Diabetes Care Team

No one can effectively manage diabetes alone. When you are diagnosed, you will meet a team of people dedicated to helping you live your life while managing your diabetes. Your team may include:

- **Primary-care doctor.** If you do not see an endocrinologist, look for a primary-care doctor, a family-practice doctor or an internist who has cared for many people with diabetes. Your primary-care doctor may also be the one who refers you to specialists or other team members.
- **Nurse educator.** A nurse educator or diabetes nurse practitioner is a registered nurse with special training and background in caring for and teaching people with diabetes. Many are also certified diabetes educators, and some may have a master's degree.
- **Nurse educator.** Nurse educators help you learn the day-to-day aspects of diabetes self-care. They can teach you what diabetes is, how to cope with diabetes and make changes in your health habits, how to use diabetes medications, how to work with insulin and give yourself shots, how to check your blood sugar and more.
- **Registered dietitian.** A registered dietitian is trained in nutrition and has passed a national exam. Your dietitian helps you figure out your food needs based on your desired weight, lifestyle, medication and other health goals.
- **Certified diabetes educator (CDE).** These professionals all work in some way to teach or care for people with diabetes. They may work in hospitals, clinics, diabetes centers or private offices.
- **Pharmacist.** Your pharmacist will play a key role in your diabetes management, as you will likely see him or her more often than any other healthcare professional. Pharmacists can provide medication information as well as assist your team in meeting your healthcare goals.

You may also be referred to additional healthcare professionals, including an endocrinologist, an eye doctor, a social worker/psychologist (to help with the emotional aspect of living with diabetes), a podiatrist (to help with diabetes-related foot issues) or others.

Source: American Diabetes Association

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## July Is All About Summer Safety!

It's summer, and we all know what that means: barbecues, camping and beaches—and sunburns, bee stings and bug bites. Take care of your family this summer with products from your local *Good Neighbor Pharmacy*.

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