

TH TOP HEALTH[®]

The Health Promotion and Wellness Newsletter.

JUNE 2014



Men: Gear Up for Better Health

Listen up, guys – if you want to improve your health, focus on 4 areas:

- 1. Take it easy.** By your 30s and 40s life can become stressful, with career, financial and family pressures. Stress can worsen several conditions, including heart trouble, poor sleep and weight gain. Try to slow down and relax every day; regular exercise helps, too.
- 2. Build muscle.** Fit in 2 to 3 strength-training workouts a week. Include 8 to 10 exercises for the major muscles. Do 1 set of each exercise with 8 to 12 repetitions per set. **Note:** Check with your health care provider first if you have any chronic health issues or are unaccustomed to exercise.
- 3. Trim belly fat.** Added weight around your middle (a waist measuring at or above 40 inches) raises your risk of heart attack, type 2 diabetes, cancer and sleep apnea. Eat smaller portions, more vegetables and fewer fatty foods. Next, exercise more and do physical chores.
- 4. Get screened.** Your key routine exams include: cholesterol checks as your health care provider advises; type 2 diabetes screening by age 45; and colonoscopy starting at age 50. Don't forget dental and vision checks. What about prostate health? At age 50, talk to your provider about whether screening is right for you.

Good communication with your provider can make getting health care nearly painless.

“Healthy citizens are the greatest asset any country can have.” – Winston Churchill

Shopping Farmers Markets

The growth in farmers markets across the nation is no small potatoes – more than 8,100 were listed in the USDA's 2013 Farmers Market Directory, up 63% in 6 years. Farmers are meeting a big demand from neighborhoods everywhere for fresh, wholesome produce.

Late spring through early autumn is ripe with an abundance of produce. To take full advantage of shopping your nearby markets:

- Search “farmers markets” online for your locale. Check sites to learn the available seasonal crops, facts about sustainable agriculture, related articles and more.
- Arrive early for the best selection of produce. Take it home and eat it fresh.
- Bring a basket or bag to fill, and cash in small bills. Try something new every visit.
- Ask vendors for tips on how to choose the best fruits and vegetables and how to store them.



Is it organic? Chat with the farmers about their growing practices – while they may not be certified organic growers, they often follow organic requirements.

Depending on the market, you may also find baked goods, meats, nuts, canned goods, herbs and flowers. Some vendors move indoors and offer seasonal crops in cooler months.

People of all ages have fun at farmers markets, connecting with growers and uniting with their communities.

Explore, relax and enjoy.



Cooking Outdoors

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

From backyard barbeques to camping, you have plenty of opportunities to eat outdoors this summer. Here are some top dining picks, and how to keep your food safe to eat.

Marinate meats: In addition to adding wonderful flavor to your meat, fish and poultry, marinades also make grilled meats healthier to consume. Cooked at high temperatures, meat can form heterocyclic amines (HCAs), which are linked to cancer. Marinades can significantly decrease HCA content. Skip salty barbeque sauces. Instead, use low-sodium ingredients that may reduce the effects of HCA, such as rosemary, olive oil, onion, garlic, lemon juice and fruit.

>> Continued on the other side.

Take a Hike – Tips for Starters

Why do people hike? First, it feels good. Hikers report these personal benefits:

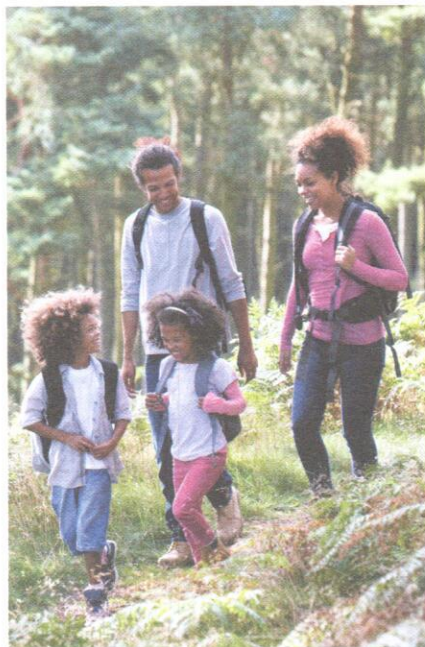
Nature – experiencing clean air, stunning views, forests and wildlife.

Physical health – hiking and climbing add measurably to your fitness.

Emotional health – a wilderness trek may be the best way to de-stress and recharge.

As a beginner, opt for short day hikes. Start with the basics:

- Choose established hikes and study your route fully – search “beginner hiking trails” online.
- Carry a map and compass or GPS.
- Wear well-fitting hiking boots or trail shoes.
- Pack light – your heaviest items should be food and water.
- Carry a first aid kit, knife, whistle and items for fire and light.
- Wear sunscreen, a hat and sunglasses.
- Take a 10-minute break every hour.
- Avoid long hikes in hot weather.
- Pack out your trash.



- Allow 1/3 of your time to descend and 2/3 of your time to climb. (If you have knee or joint problems, take equal time to ascend and descend.)

Precautions: Check with your health care provider first if you have a chronic medical condition, or you've been sedentary. Gradually increase your hike length and intensity. *Take a hike!*

Cooking Outdoors

>> *Continued from the other side.*

Safety tip: Don't reuse bacteria-laden marinades once meats are cooked. Make a fresh batch for basting or dressing.

Add vegetables: Vegetables that grill well include peppers, eggplant, zucchini and corn. Always use separate cutting boards and utensils when handling meat and preparing vegetables to prevent transferring harmful bacteria from raw meat to vegetables.

Safety tip: After cleaning your grill with a brush and before cooking, look for bristles that may have fallen. Ingesting bristles can cause injury. Inspect grilled food before you eat it.

Separate food and drink: Cold water is perfect on a hot day. Pack beverages and perishable foods in separate coolers. Your food stays colder when you're not constantly opening the cooler.

Safety tip: Keep food out of the temperature danger zone of 40°F to 140°F. Harmful bacteria can grow in as little as 2 hours in this temperature range.



Summer Sniffles? May Be Allergies

A runny nose in the middle of summer? Is it a cold, or is it allergies?

Colds and allergens cause similar symptoms. They can trigger asthma attacks, and colds can worsen allergies.

You can often determine if it's a cold or an allergy by examining your symptoms:

1. Symptoms common to both are sneezing, runny nose, congestion, scratchy throat and sometimes fatigue.
2. Fever and body aches may occur with a cold, but not an allergy.
3. Discolored mucus is a sign of a cold, not an allergy.

Allergic to trees, grass and other growing things? Untreated symptoms may last as long as you are exposed to the allergen – and they can worsen. These include sneezing, a runny or stuffy nose, itchy eyes, postnasal drip and sinus pressure.

Ask your health care provider about medication to reduce symptoms. Follow label directions carefully. If your symptoms don't ease up, see your provider.

Cold symptom relief: Try lozenges for a cough or a sore throat. If you can, use a decongestant for 2 to 3 days. **Note:** People with heart disease, high blood pressure, thyroid disease or diabetes should not use decongestants – check with your provider.

Tame Your Temper

Anger is often beneficial. It can alert us that something is wrong, lead us to solutions and help us heal. But, anger that flares up frequently or burns too hot can cause problems in our personal and professional lives. A technique called *self-distancing* can keep anger from blazing out of control, according to Ohio State University and University of Michigan researchers.

It's normal when you're angry to mentally put yourself in the middle of the situation, perhaps obsessing about how to retaliate. This can aggravate your anger and affect the people around you.

To self-distance, imagine the person or situation making you angry from far away, as if you were a “fly on the wall.” Become an observer, not a participant.

Other techniques that can help control anger: Take a brisk walk, breathe deeply, count to 10, use humor and imagine a relaxing scene. Find ways to step back, calm down and find answers.



Smart Moves toolkit is at www.personalbest.com/extras/June14tools.

Next Month: Baby Your Feet