

healthy heart

HEALTH NEWS AND INFORMATION

Mix it up

A little variety could help spice up your workouts. When you vary the types of exercise you do—for example, alternating days of walking, cycling or strength training—you're cross-training.

Among the benefits: Mixing up your routine can help stave off boredom, so chances are good that you will keep exercising. What's more, your whole body can benefit when you do a range of activities. And you may also reduce your risk of an overuse injury.

Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians; American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons



Pamper your feet

Before you step out to get physical, consider the shoes you're stepping into.

Should you decide to go with an athletic shoe, you may want a design that protects your feet from specific stresses related to your activity, be it walking, aerobics or court sports.

No matter what your shoe choice, make comfort and fit a priority. For example, buy your shoes at day's end (when feet are often largest), and remember that you should never have to break in new shoes.

Source: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons



EXERCISE IS A POWERFUL medicine when you consider that it can help prevent and control numerous health problems, including heart disease and high blood pressure.

Yet making a habit of moving more is easier said than done. These tips can help you get in the groove and stay on track with an exercise program: ■ Pick activities you'll enjoy. Walking is one idea. It's easy and requires no more than a good pair of shoes. ■ Pace yourself. While you'll want to set your sights on getting at least 30 minutes of activity most days of the week, you should start slowly and steadily increase your intensity and

duration. ■ Set a weekly schedule. It helps you get in the habit of exercising if you do it at the same time each day. No time for a long workout? No sweat. Get your exer-

Exercise can help prevent and control many health problems.

cise in 15-minute bouts. ■ Invite a friend. The buddy system makes exercise fun, which might help you stick with your workouts.

If you stop exercising, don't throw in the towel—just start getting back on pace.

Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians; American Heart Association; American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons

HEALTH facts

YOUNG WOMEN AT RISK

Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women in the U.S. Although women 65 and older are at greatest risk of the disease, younger women are not immune. Heart disease is the third leading cause of death among women between 25 and 44 years old and the second leading cause of death among women 45 to 64.

—U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

MAKE A PLAN TO SURVIVE

If you have heart disease, you're at high risk of having a heart attack. Because of that risk, you should make sure that family, friends and co-workers know the warning signs of a heart attack and what to do—such as call 911 right away—if you have one.

—National Institutes of Health



stress test

WHY YOU MIGHT NEED ONE

HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR HEART?

Sometimes the best way to answer that question is with a stress test, also known as an exercise test.

Under physical stress, such as climbing or running, your heart works hard. It needs more blood and oxygen than it does while you're resting. By monitoring your heart while it is under stress, doctors can tell if your arteries are carrying enough oxygen-rich blood to nourish your heart.

Your doctor may suggest a stress test if you:

- Have coronary artery disease.
- Have recently had a heart attack.
- Feel faint or have an irregular heartbeat when you exercise.
- Are short of breath.

What to expect

During a stress test, you will probably exercise on a treadmill or stationary bike. A technician will monitor your heart activity, breathing and blood pressure.

You may have electrodes attached to your chest, arms or legs. Or you may be monitored through an imaging test, such as echocardiography (which uses sound waves) or nuclear imaging (which uses radioactive dye) to create images of the heart's blood flow.

If you aren't able to exercise, your doctor may suggest a pharmacological stress test. For this test you'll take medicine that causes your heart to pump as though you were exercising.

Stress tests can help:

- Diagnose coronary artery disease and other heart-related conditions.
- Check whether treatment for a heart condition is working.
- Determine a safe level of exercise.

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute



To learn more about stress tests, go to www.nhlbi.nih.gov.



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Linda Bahrke
Plan Administrator

James J. McMillen,
MD, FACP, CMD
Medical Director

Amy Owens
Marketing/Communications

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cold and flu

PROTECT YOURSELF

SNIFFLE. YOU MIGHT HAVE A cold.

Oh, achy muscles. Maybe it's the flu, instead.

There are lots of similarities between a cold and the flu (influenza). Both are caused by viruses, for example. And they share many of the same symptoms, which can be treated with the same medications.

But there's one major difference between the two, and it's nothing to sneeze at: You can get a vaccination against the flu.

Treating colds and flu

There are still no cures for either a cold or the flu, although an antiviral medicine can shorten the duration of the flu.

If you do get sick with one of these illnesses, what you can do to feel better is treat your symptoms.

- To ease a sore throat, gargle with warm salt water or use lozenges or throat sprays.
- To ease aches, pains or fever, try analgesics, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.
- To ease congestion, look for

medicines containing antihistamines or decongestants. Don't use these medications, however, if you have high blood pressure or thyroid disease.

Talk with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any over-the-counter (OTC) remedy.

Many OTC cold and flu products can cause problems if you take other medicines or have certain health conditions.

Preventing illness

It can be tough to stay healthy when others around you are ill.

Your first line of defense: Wash your hands often. And try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth with your (possibly germ-carrying) hands.

Also, talk to your doctor about getting a flu vaccination every autumn—it will reduce your risk of getting the flu.

A yearly flu shot is especially recommended for people with heart, lung or other chronic illnesses.

Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians; American Lung Association



Medicines can help ease cold and flu symptoms. However, keeping your hands washed is one of the best safeguards for preventing a cold or flu.



Take your shot against pneumonia

Getting vaccinated against the flu is strongly advised for anyone who has heart disease. So is getting vaccinated against pneumonia, another potentially deadly disease.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that

everyone 65 or older receive the vaccine that helps protect against pneumococcal pneumonia.

The agency also recommends the vaccine for anyone 2 years old or older who: ■ Has a chronic health problem, such as heart disease. ■ Has a weakened immune system, due either to disease or the use of certain medications. ■ Is an Alaska Native or from certain Native American populations.

Most people only need to get vaccinated once. Your doctor might suggest a second dose if you have a certain long-term health problem.

You might also need a second shot if you had your first vaccination before you turned 65 and five or more years have passed since you had that shot.

Ask your doctor if the vaccine to prevent pneumococcal pneumonia is appropriate for you.



focus ON FLAVOR

USING HERBS AND SPICES

CUTTING BACK ON SODIUM IS something most Americans need to do. And one way to accomplish that is to use herbs and spices instead of salt to flavor food.

But if you're not familiar with various herbs and spices, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by all of the choices available in the grocery store. Which herb goes well with what food?

Here are some suggestions to get you started. Try: ■ Basil with fish, lamb, lean ground meats, soups and sauces. ■ Dill with fish, soup, vegetables and salads. ■ Rosemary with chicken, beef, potatoes and sauces. ■ Sage with lean meats, stews, tomatoes and fish. ■ Thyme with lean meats, sauces, soups,

tomatoes and salads. ■ Turmeric with lean meats, fish, sauces and rice.

To get the most out of your herbs: ■ Store dried herbs in a cool, dry, dark place. For full flavor, use them within a year of buying them. ■ Stand fresh herbs in a little water, like cut flowers, cover them with a plastic bag and store them in the refrigerator. ■ Use about three times as much of a fresh herb as you would a dried version; dried herbs are stronger.

Sources: American Dietetic Association; American Heart Association

For more information,
call our nurse line at
800-455-2476.

HEALTHY. recipe

Strawberry-spinach salad

Ingredients

- 4 cups spinach leaves, torn into bite-size pieces
- 1 pint strawberries, stemmed and sliced
- 1 small red onion, sliced and separated into rings
- ½ cup prepared nonfat honey-mustard dressing

Instructions

- Line 4 serving plates with spinach.
 - Arrange strawberries and onion rings, equally divided, on spinach.
 - Drizzle each salad with 2 tablespoons of dressing.
- Recipe serves 4.

Nutrition facts (per serving)	
Calories 101	Calories from fat 0
Percent Daily Value*	
Total fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 375mg	16%
Carbohydrate 23g	8%
Protein 3g	
Percent of calories from fat 0	

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet.

Recipe courtesy of California Strawberry Commission. Copyright 2007. All rights reserved.