

Kick the Smoking Habit!



YES, YOU CAN KICK THE SMOKING HABIT

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Make Your "Quit Plan" Today

Smokers often say, "Don't tell me why to quit, tell me how." There is no one right way to quit smoking, but there are some requirements for quitting with success. These four factors are key:

- Making the decision to quit
- Picking a "Quit Day" and making a plan
- Dealing with withdrawal symptoms
- Keeping your commitment to quit

The decision to quit smoking is one that only you can make. Others may want you to quit, but the real commitment must come from you. Think about why you want to quit:

- Are you worried that you could get a smoking-related disease?

- Do you really believe that the benefits of quitting outweigh the benefits of continuing to smoke?
- Do you know someone who has had health problems because of their smoking?
- Are you ready to make a serious plan to quit?

If you are thinking about quitting, talking with your doctor, setting a date and then deciding on a plan will help move you to the next step.

— Source: American Cancer Society



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Your Healthy Heart

Choosing Low-Fat Protein

Lean meat, poultry and fish, low-fat dairy products, and egg whites or egg substitute are some of your best sources of protein. But be careful to choose lower-fat options, such as skim milk rather than whole milk and skinless chicken breasts rather than fried chicken patties.

Fish is another good alternative to high-fat meats. And certain types of fish are rich in healthy omega-3 fatty acids. You'll find the highest amounts in cold-water fish, such as salmon, mackerel and herring.

Other sources are flaxseed, walnuts, soybeans and canola oil.

Legumes — beans, peas and lentils — also are good sources of protein and contain less fat and no cholesterol, making them good substitutes for meat. Substituting plant protein for animal protein (for example, a soy veggie burger for a hamburger) also will reduce your fat and cholesterol intake.

— Source: Mayo Clinic

Choosing a Weight-Loss Program?

Ask about Success Rates

Thinking about joining a weight-loss program? Ask whether the program can provide studies that document its success. Ask what percentage of all customers have completed the program, how much weight they lost, and how successfully they've kept the weight off over a one-year period or longer.

Remember, information in a program's advertising is based on only some of the people in the program and likely reflects those most successful at meeting their

weight-loss and maintenance goals. Make sure you get the whole picture before signing on the dotted line.

— Source: Federal Trade Commission
Bureau of Consumer Protection



Supplement Update

Tips for Taking Iron

Iron is absorbed the best when taken on an empty stomach. However, some people have stomach cramps, nausea and diarrhea when taking iron and may need to take their iron with a small amount of food.

Milk, calcium and antacids should NOT be taken at the same time as iron supplements. You should wait at least two hours after ingesting these before taking your iron supplements.

Foods that you should NOT eat at the same time as you take your iron include:

- High-fiber foods, such as whole grains, raw vegetables and bran

- Foods or drinks containing caffeine

If you have questions about how to take iron supplements, talk with your doctor or pharmacist. Always consult your doctor before taking any dietary supplement, as some may interfere with prescription medications you are taking and some may not be appropriate for people with certain medical conditions.

— Source: National Institutes of Health

SENIOR HEALTH UPDATE

Get Moving for Stress Reduction, Better Health

We all know the old joke: "If I had known I'd live this long, I'd have taken better care of myself!" Back in 1900, people had a 50% chance of living to age 47. Today, we have a 50% chance of living to age 77. Why not do everything you can to make those senior years some of your best?

Moderate daily physical activity can greatly reduce the risk of developing or dying from cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers, such as colon cancer. Daily physical activity helps to lower blood pressure and cholesterol, helps prevent or slow osteoporosis, and helps reduce obesity, stress, symptoms of anxiety and depression, and symptoms of arthritis.

Talk with your doctor before beginning your exercise program. Then get moving for better health!

— Source: University of Houston



DID YOU KNOW?

Overcoming Your Barriers to Exercise

Most of us say it to ourselves now and then: "Between work, family and other demands, I'm too busy to exercise."

Let's face it: It's time to make physical activity a priority. Carve out some time each week to be active, and put it on your calendar. Try waking up a half-hour earlier to walk, scheduling lunchtime workouts or taking an evening fitness class.

Build physical activity into your routine chores. Rake the yard, wash the car or do energetic housework. That way you do what you need to do around the house and move around, too.

Make family time physically active. Plan a weekend hike through a park, a family softball game or an evening walk around the block.

— Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases



YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH Sleep Linked to Children's Alertness, Behavior, Study Says

While healthy sleep is essential for alertness and other key functions related to academic success, research involving the impact of the amount of sleep on a child's day-to-day behavior in school has been limited. An estimated 64% of school-aged children (ages 6 to 12) go to bed later than 9 p.m., and 43% of boys ages 10 to 11 sleep less than the recommended amount each night.

According to the authors of a recent study published in the medical journal *Pediatrics*, a modest addition of sleep each night — an average of 27 minutes among children ages 7 to 11 — resulted in significant improvement in their ability to regulate their emotions, including limiting restless-impulsive behavior in school.

Conversely, children who decreased their sleep by 54 minutes were associated with detectable deterioration of such measures. Study authors say these new findings support the importance of sleep among school-age children, and the need for greater efforts to eliminate child sleep problems.

— Source: American Academy of Pediatrics



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CUT THE SODIUM FOR BETTER HEALTH

Sodium is a mineral found in table salt and in many packaged foods. Many foods high in sodium don't taste salty. Most people eat about twice as much salt as they need. Your body only needs less than 1 teaspoon of salt, which is between 1,500 and 2,300 mg of sodium, per day. If you have high blood pressure, you should have no more than 1,500 mg of sodium per day. (Check with your doctor to determine your own recommended maximum sodium intake per day.)

A diet high in sodium can raise your blood pressure. High blood pressure can cause heart attack and stroke. Everyone can benefit from eating less sodium. Try to reduce your consumption of these foods:

- Smoked, cured, salted or canned meat such as bacon, cold cuts and ham
- Frozen breaded meats and dinners

- Canned dinners such as ravioli, spam® and chili
- Regular and processed cheese, cottage cheese, cheese spreads and sauces
- Biscuit, pancake and waffle mixes
- Pizza
- Salted crackers
- Prepackaged mixes for potatoes, rice, pasta and stuffing
- Regular canned and dehydrated soup, broth and bouillon
- Premade pasta and tomato sauces
- Salted butter or margarine

— Source: Tulane University Prevention Research Center

HEALTH TIP



How Do I Prepare for a Pap Test?

The Pap test, also called a Pap smear, checks for changes in the cells of your cervix, the lower part of the uterus that opens into the vagina. The Pap test can tell if you have an infection, abnormal cervical cells or cervical cancer.

Many things can cause inaccurate test results by washing away or hiding abnormal cells. So doctors suggest that for two days before the test you avoid:

- Douching
- Using tampons
- Using vaginal creams, suppositories or medicines
- Using vaginal deodorant sprays or powders
- Having sexual intercourse

— Source: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health

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