

TAKE CHARGE!



December 2020

Save Time for Exercise

For most of us, screen time has significantly increased our sitting time. In 2018, an American Cancer Society 21-year study of 127,554 people linked prolonged sitting time with a higher risk of death from all causes, including cancer, cardiovascular diseases, lung, liver and digestive diseases, Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease.



Let this be a driving factor in reducing your sitting and fitting in some daily exercise. Finding time for fitness activities can be challenging for folks with work and family demands. First, consider the rewards of regular exercise: protecting your health and feeling your best. Second, make exercise a priority. Third, don't make excuses with every little interruption that comes along.

Ways to stay motivated:

- Wear a fitness tracker.
- Involve friends and family.
- Recruit a lunchtime walking partner.
- Let your dog inspire you to go out the door.
- Enjoy outdoor sports.
- Lift weights during TV time.
- Make physical chores count inside and outside.
- Stand up during phone calls, email checks and online searches.
- Take the stairs and walk whenever you find opportunities.



Break it up. If you can't always fit in a 30-minute workout, shorter bursts of physical activity can count toward the overall goal of 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity cardio activity. Or try vigorous-intensity aerobic activities, such as jogging or elliptical training, for 75 minutes a week, or 15 minutes, five days a week. Make it a habit.

“Success seems to be largely a matter of hanging on after others have let go.”

— William Feather

city events

Deferred Compensation Webinars

Navigating the Site

Wednesday, December 2

11:30 am - 12:30 pm

[Click here to register](#)

Nearing Retirement

Wednesday, December 9

11:30 am – 12:30 pm

[Click here to register](#)

Contributing to Deferred Compensation

Wednesday, December 16

11:30 am – 12:30 pm

[Click here to register](#)

Deferred Compensation End of Year Check-In

Tuesday, December 22

11:30 am – 12:30 pm

[Click here to register](#)

A Parent's Introduction to Rethink Webinar

Tuesday, December 8

10:00 am – 11:00 am

[Click here to register](#)

Goal Setting for Life and Work Webinar

Thursday, December 10

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

[Click here to register](#)

Time Management Webinar

Tuesday, December 15

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

[Click here to register](#)

Health Plan Options for Retiring Employees

View the pre-recorded 2021 webinar any time [here](#)

Insight: Vision and Eye Health

By Diane McReynolds, Executive Editor Emeritus



Did you know? More than 80% of 3,500-plus U.S. adults age 18 and older surveyed in August 2019 said they were knowledgeable about eye and vision health.

Yet fewer than 20% correctly identified the three main causes of blindness in the U.S., which are glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration and diabetic eye disease, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology. And only about a third knew we do not always experience symptoms before losing vision to eye diseases.

Take the following self-assessment to learn if you may be at risk for vision problems.

Have you ever had an eye injury or eye surgery? yes no

Be aware that eye injuries and surgeries can increase your risk for eye disorders. See an eye care provider (ophthalmologist) regularly to check on your eye and vision condition.

Have you noticed a change in your vision during the past 12 months? yes no

Any changes in vision, such as night blindness, blurred vision or sensitivity to light, should be reported to your eye care provider. Don't delay.

Do you have persistent pain or redness in or around your eye? yes no

Ongoing pain not due to sinus problems, allergies, headache or eye strain can signal a serious eye problem. If your eye hurts continuously, get emergency care.

Do you have diabetes? yes no

People with diabetes are at risk for diabetic retinopathy, an eye disease that harms blood vessels in the eye. If you have diabetes, eye experts say you need a dilated eye exam annually or as often as your provider advises.

Do your children get regular eye exams, too? yes no

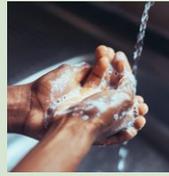
Kids are susceptible to nearsightedness, amblyopia (lazy eye) and eye infections. Left untreated, these problems can interfere with reading, focusing and learning. Detecting and treating problems early give children the best chance for healthy vision long term.

Don't put off seeking eye care from an ophthalmologist trained to identify possible threats to your vision. Glasses, contact lenses, LASIK (laser eye surgery) and other procedures can be used to restore good vision. Learn more at aao.org/eye-health.

Prevent Colds 5 Ways

The odds of catching a cold this winter are high. Every year, U.S. adults have an average of two or three colds and children have even more, the CDC says. But that doesn't mean catching colds and the accompanying sore throats, sneezes and body aches are inevitable this season.

Five research-backed tips for preventing colds:



1. Wash your hands often with soap and water.

Cold-causing viruses are picked up on surfaces and stay on your skin for hours. So, wash your hands regularly, lathering well for at least 20 seconds. Wash your hands before and after putting on, touching and taking off a face covering.



2. Keep hand sanitizer nearby for times soap and water aren't available. Make sure to use a product that contains at least 60% alcohol.



3. Be aware of where you put your hands. Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. Even a few cold virus particles can infiltrate your body through your eyes, nose or mouth and make you sick.



4. Avoid people who are sick. Keep your distance from others with colds. If a family member has a cold, increase handwashing and avoid close contact as much as possible.



5. Disinfect surfaces which are frequently touched. Wash toys with non-toxic soap and warm water and use disinfectant wipes on doorknobs and counter tops.

The Ergonomics of Reaching Overhead

Certain work responsibilities may require us to reach overhead, which can stress our necks and shoulders. This can result in muscle and joint injuries. To prevent injury and strain, follow these ergonomic guidelines when reaching overhead:

- **Lighten the load.** If you must lift or lower a load from above, lighten it if possible.
- **Change the process.** Work overhead for shorter periods of time. Use work methods that are less labor intensive and may reduce your time reaching overhead.
- **Use tools and equipment** that can help you, such as drill bit or screwdriver extensions. Or use a sturdy platform or an aerial lift to decrease vertical distance.
- **Preassemble fixtures** or whatever you are fitting before installing them to minimize time spent working overhead.
- **Consider working in teams.** One person can lift while the other assembles. Rotate the tasks until the job is complete.
- **Take regular and frequent breaks** to give muscles time to relax.



Having a difficult time deciding what to give friends and loved ones? Subscription boxes offer a budget-friendly way to try products before making full-size purchases. Most boxes offer monthly subscriptions with four to six sample-size products. Contents include food, home, hobby, and personal grooming products. You can also get boxes for pets for the animal lovers in your life. Most boxes cost \$10 to \$20 a month. Subscribers can customize their boxes to suit their preferences. Subscription products can be physical or digital, such as newspapers and magazines. Search online for **subscription boxes** to learn more. — Jamie Lynn Byram, PhD, AFC



TIP of the MONTH

Omelets

Omelets are delicious, nutritious and infinitely customizable.

Making individual omelets (rather than one large one) will result in fluffier omelets that are easier to flip. The ideal nonstick skillet for a three-egg omelet is eight inches with sloping sides, so you can easily slide the omelet onto a plate. Make sure your skillet is very hot before you add the eggs. Then, be patient. Let it set before you flip it, or you'll end up with scrambled eggs.

Better Breakfast Menu

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD



Do you ever start the day with a sugary doughnut but feel hungry about an hour later? The food you choose at breakfast can set your energy level and hunger cues for the whole morning, so make smart selections.

Starting the day with white flour and sugar won't provide the nutrients you need for long-lasting energy. Plain bread, pastries or sugary cereal are digested quickly, which spikes blood sugar levels and leaves you feeling hungry again. A better plan? Introduce foods rich in protein and fiber at breakfast or lunch time. This plan can help combat type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome.

Protein-rich foods provide a feeling of fullness because they are digested slowly. This helps you feel satisfied longer and may curb your craving for sweets. Try eggs, Greek yogurt, cottage cheese, peanut butter, beans, cow's milk or alternative milks made from soy or peas. **Note:** Most almond and rice beverages contain little protein.

Bulk up with fiber. Like protein, fiber helps promote satiety (feeling full). Include any of these fiber-rich foods at breakfast: nuts, seeds, vegetables, fruit, whole grains, bran, beans or lentils. Some healthy fats at breakfast also help you digest the meal more slowly. Fat is found in nuts, seeds, avocado and cheese.

Some winning breakfast combinations include:

- Peanut butter and banana oatmeal (made with milk or soy/pea beverage).
- Vegetable omelet with whole-grain toast.
- Greek yogurt parfait with nuts and berries.
- Cottage cheese and fruit sprinkled with seeds.
- Black bean, tomato and egg burritos.
- Bran cereal with milk and fruit.
- Whole-grain toast with cheese and tomato.
- Greek yogurt green smoothies.



Easy Breakfast Burritos

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 8 eggs | 1 red bell pepper, diced |
| Pinch salt and pepper | ¼ cup salsa |
| 1 tbsp butter | 2 tbsp chopped fresh cilantro |
| 8 whole-grain tortillas | |
| 1 cup cooked black beans, gently mashed | |



EASY recipe

In a large bowl, crack and whisk eggs. **Add** salt and pepper. **In** a large nonstick skillet, melt butter over medium heat. **Add** eggs. **Cook**, stirring, until eggs are scrambled, about 5 minutes. **Arrange** tortillas on clean work surface. **On** each tortilla: Spread mashed beans along center. **Top** with peppers, salsa, eggs and cilantro. **Fold** up bottom of tortillas over filling, then fold in sides and roll up tightly. **Eat** immediately, or freeze for future breakfasts.

Makes 8 burritos. Per serving: 250 calories | 14g protein | 9g total fat | 4g saturated fat | 2g mono fat | 1g poly fat | 28g carbohydrate | 3g sugar | 6g fiber | 345mg sodium

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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- **Use Your 2020 Health Flexible Spending Account (FSA):** If you'd like to reduce your remaining Health FSA balance by **December 31, 2020**, check out eligible expenses [here](#). You may also search FSAstore.com for 100% FSA-eligible products.
- **Support When you Need it:** Several programs are available to City employees and covered family members when life events become overwhelming. See the below resources.
 - **AbleTo Behavioral Health Program** – convenient eight-week program with counseling and coaching. Available to all Aetna members. Call **1-844-330-3648** to enroll.
 - **Kaiser Mental Health Services** – meet with a mental health specialist to address life stresses. Available to all Kaiser Permanente members. Call the Mental Health Access Center at **1-888-287-2680** or **206-630-1680** for non-emergency first-time appointments.
 - **Resources for Living Employee Assistance Program** – get support dealing with work and personal issues. Available to all regular employees and their household members. Call **1-888-272-7252** or **1-888-879-8274 (TTY)**.
 - **Teladoc Mental Health Services** – talk to a therapist from anywhere. Available to Aetna members on the Most Benefit Program. Register your Teladoc.com account via web or app, request a visit and answer a few questions.

EXPERT advice — Elizabeth Smoots, MD

Q: Health screening newborns?



A: Newborn screening is the practice of testing all babies in their first days of life for certain serious disorders. The testing is offered in every state and is usually performed before the newborn leaves the hospital. After home deliveries, it can be done at home or in the doctor's office.

Why are infants screened? Newborn screening checks for phenylketonuria, hypothyroidism, sickle cell disease, cystic fibrosis and other potential newborn conditions. Early detection and treatment help prevent disabilities or life-threatening illnesses.

How is screening done? The test is performed by pricking the baby's heel for a few drops of blood. Most states also provide a hearing test to screen for congenital hearing loss. In addition, blood oxygen readings taken with skin sensors can screen for congenital heart disease. In some states a repeat blood test is done when the baby is one to two weeks old.



December is Safe Toys & Gifts Awareness Month.



Annual Safe Gift Guide

This year, the world seems to be focusing on safety more than ever, so giving the gift of safety is one that many people may choose. Here are some ideas:

For the health-conscious fashion buff:

- **Designer and fashion masks.** Who says you can't look good while staying safe? There's a wide selection of masks for every taste and age.
- **Sun-safe clothing.** Buying for a gardener or a person who spends a lot of time outdoors? Consider purchasing sun-protective clothing. There are options that are lightweight, moisture wicking and breathable at various prices.

For the online shopper:

- **Safe delivery boxes.** There are many size and tamper-resistant options available for package deliveries to prevent front porch or apartment hallway theft.
- **Smart doorbells.** Many will appreciate doorbells that allow them to see when deliveries are made as well as who is outside their doors.

For the athlete:

- **Reflective running gear.** Walkers and runners will appreciate reflective gear, especially if they choose to run before sunrise or after sunset.
- **Running lights.** Select from models for early morning or evening runners and hikers that can be worn on the head, arm, ankle or even on bike helmets.
- **LED bike lights.** These can be attached to handlebars or wheels.



Stay out of the T-zone. Your eyes, nose and mouth comprise the T-zone; they're entry portals for germs. Researchers say it's the area people touch most often, and they usually don't realize it's a habit. When you touch something contaminated with germs and then touch the T-zone, the result can be infection with a cold, flu, COVID-19 or other illness. The solution? Work to keep your hands off your face. The more you stay out of the zone, the better.