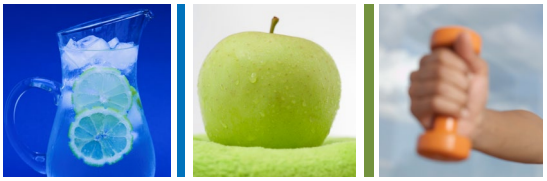
City of Seattle

# TAKE CHARGE!

for health and living

August 2014



take charge

## TLC for Your Knees

**Your knee is the largest joint in your body.** Working as a hinge, lever and shock absorber, your knee joint allows you to stand up, walk, kneel, climb, squat and kick.

Consequently, the knees are critical to your mobility – and vulnerable to pain, injury and weakness, especially when we play sports and as we age.

### Protect your knees 4 ways:

1. **One of the most common causes** of painful, weak knees is post-traumatic arthritis that can develop years after a fracture, ligament injury or meniscus damage. ***Tip:*** Long-term over-exercising often leads to knee injuries from overuse.
2. **Strengthen the surrounding muscles.** The best way to protect your knees is to power up the front, back, inner and outer thigh muscles – these act like shock absorbers for your knees. They also help to support your knee and keep the kneecap tracking in good alignment. ***Tip:*** Adopt a sensible routine with the help of a physical therapist or certified exercise trainer.
3. **Stay slim.** Less weight means less force on your knees during everyday activities. Any reduction in pressure helps lower your risk for arthritis and injuries. ***Tip:*** Losing a few pounds can reduce the pain and swelling of arthritis.
4. **Stay limber.** Many knee problems are caused by tight, inflexible leg muscles. Proper stretching technique: Exercise for 5 to 10 minutes, and then stretch. After stretching, continue exercising.

>>*Don't ignore knee pain.* When it begins to limit your ability to do normal things, get it checked out before it leads to worse pain or serious, permanent damage.

## Get Smart About Antibiotics

Antibiotics are a precious health resource. But if we use them too often or incorrectly, they become less effective in treating us. Today, antibiotic resistance is a serious global health problem – most major bacterial infections are becoming resistant to commonly used antibiotics.

Misuse of antibiotics is partly to blame for emerging superbugs. Some bacteria are naturally resistant to certain antibiotics. Others mutate, and become tougher to treat and more dangerous. ➡ Continued on page 4.

## city events

**Part II – Nutrition and Mid-Life**
**Tuesday, August 5**
12 noon - 1:00 pm
SMT 4050

**Time Management *Webinar***
**Thursday, August 7**
12 noon – 1:00 pm
Login: See future flyer*

**Women and Investing – Deferred Compensation**
**Thursday, August 14**
12 noon – 12:45 pm
SMT 4080

**Four Pillars of Financial Health**
**Wednesday, August 20**
12 noon – 1:00 pm
SMT 4050

**Free Blood Pressure Screening**
**Wednesday, August 27**
Stop by between 10:30 am and 1:30 pm
SMT 4096

**Wise Investing – Deferred Compensation**
**Wednesday, August 27**
12 noon – 12:45 pm
SMT 4020
Register at 206-447-1924

*Or, call Central Benefits at (206) 615-1340.

*"Nothing is impossible; the word itself says 'I'm possible'!"*
*– Audrey Hepburn*

This Edition

➡ Exercise for Every Body
➡ Conquering Perfectionism
➡ Mystery Weight Gain
➡ Gazpacho with Whole-Grain Orzo

# FOR EVERY BODY

## *Every Step Counts*

top fitness

*By Diane McReynolds, Founder, Personal Best Healthlines*

**Exercise can improve your health, your attitude and your odds against many diseases and disabilities.** Yet most Americans aren't meeting their basic exercise needs. The most common obstacles we face are lack of time, pleasure and knowledge about how to exercise.

**To become more active, start with a commitment.** What do you hope to gain from being more active? Visualize all the pluses, such as more energy and strength, better sleep or appearance, stress relief and weight loss – you'll notice many changes happen quickly.

**To get started,** aim for 30 minutes, 5 days a week, of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking. *More ideas:*

- Hike or bike on nearby trails.
- Exercise with free weights (e.g., dumbbells) while watching TV.
- Try a water exercise class.
- Stand while reading or texting.
- Walk around (or pace) while talking on the phone.
- Get busy around the house – clean up the garden, rake leaves or wash the car.

**People who stick with exercise** for years often report they find the pleasure of physical activity is in **moving** – they love the way exercise makes them feel. Just give yourself a few weeks to make it happen. After a while, it becomes second nature to move every day.

body matters

# Mystery Weight Gain

**Working out and eating smart, but adding pounds?** Weight gain is complicated by several factors. Here are some that might surprise you.

**Muscle gain –** By exercising more, you may build more dense muscle mass, which can gradually increase your scale weight, even as your body fat decreases. A good sign: Are your waist and thigh measurements smaller?

**Chronic stress –** Your body's stress-response system may activate stress hormones that disrupt various functions, such as appetite, digestion, sleep, depression, metabolism and weight. Seek relaxation every day.

**Sleep deprivation –** We have mounting evidence that adults who get too little sleep are more likely to gain weight than people who get 7 to 9 hours per night. One factor, fatigue from lack of sleep, may trigger appetite.

**Sitting more –** Whether working at your desk, driving or watching TV, become aware of your sit-down time. Sitting burns fewer calories than being up and active. Do more on your feet.

**Medications –** Several drugs can cause gradual to rapid weight gain. Among the most common are certain antidepressant, steroid, anti-seizure, hypertension and heartburn medications. Don't stop using your medications before consulting your health care provider; ask about possible alternatives.

**Medical conditions –** The most common one affecting weight gain is hypothyroidism, a deficiency of the thyroid hormone leading to decreased metabolism.

If you're gaining (or losing) weight and the reason is unclear, ask your provider for help identifying the cause.

HEALTH OBSERVANCE

August is Immunization Awareness Month.

# Immunizations for Everyone

We all need to stay current with our shots – adults and children. Vaccination is critical to staying well and preventing the spread of diseases.

The adult vaccination rate remains low, particularly among people without health insurance coverage. Also, many parents refuse vaccinations for themselves and their families, fearing they may cause illness (or autism in children), concerns that have been widely (and scientifically) discredited. With rare exceptions, vaccines are safe.

### Current CDC-Recommended Vaccines:

***Note:*** These guidelines are for healthy, average-risk adults and may not be appropriate for high-risk adults.

**Hepatitis A:** For any adult seeking protection against hepatitis A or who is at increased risk for hepatitis A.

**Hepatitis B:** For any adult seeking protection against hepatitis B or who is at increased risk for hepatitis B.

**Human Papillomavirus (HPV):** To age 26 (for women) and to age 21 (for men).

**Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR):** For adults without evidence of immunity.

**Meningococcal:** Given up to 18 years in people with certain high-risk chronic health conditions but is not recommended for normal healthy adults.

**Pneumococcal:** For age 65+.

**Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Td/Tdap):** Tdap once, then a Td booster every 10 years.

**Varicella (chickenpox):** For adults without evidence of immunity.

**Zoster (shingles):** For age 60+.

During your next routine visit with your health care provider, talk about your vaccination needs. Learn more at cdc.gov/vaccines.

best bites

Cooking tip:

## Herb Magic

By the pinch or bunch, fresh herbs infuse your food with aroma and flavor. Experiment with tomato basil salad, cilantro yogurt dip, minted fruit salad, chicken with thyme, or rosemary potatoes. Grow your own indoor herb garden for freshness at your fingertips.

on your mind

# Conquering **Perfectionism**

**While being "perfect" is often held up as an ideal in the media and society,** constantly striving for perfection can hinder you from reaching your goals. According to the American Psychological Association, perfectionism is also related to many mental health problems, including depression, anxiety and eating disorders.

Perfectionism involves certain behaviors, such as excessively checking work to make sure it's right, constantly re-doing tasks, being unable to let them go, agonizing over tiny details, and avoiding new challenges for fear of making mistakes.

Take these steps to reduce perfectionism:

- **Be realistic.** Replace self-criticism with statements such as: *Nobody is perfect, I'll do my best,* or *It's OK to make mistakes.*
- **Broaden your view.** If fear of making mistakes paralyzes you, ask: *What's the worst that could happen? Could I survive that? Will this still matter in a year?*
- **Ask for help.** A friend or coworker can help you set realistic goals and develop new, reasonable standards.

>> There's nothing wrong with having high standards. But when you can't move forward because nothing is ever "right," it may be time to change your perspective.

eating smart

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

# Give Your Lunch a Makeover

**Whether you bring lunch from home or head to the local food court, fill your plate with health in mind.** While some people overindulge at lunch (3 cups of fast-food white rice), others eat too little (bowl of lettuce, anyone?) and forget the importance of well-rounded meals for all-day energy.

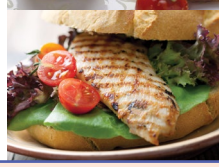
**Try this:** At lunch, ensure half your plate contains fruits and vegetables, a quarter protein and a quarter whole grains. Here are some tips to add super foods to your midday meals.

**Improve sandwiches.** Replace high-sodium, processed deli meat and turkey with home-cooked turkey or chicken breast. Choose 100% whole-grain bread instead of wheat, multigrain or white bread. Layer sandwiches with tomato, peppers, shredded eggplant and other vegetables. Use unprocessed cheese. Opt for salmon, tuna, nut butter or hummus for a change from meat.

**Add more nutritional punch to salads.** Choose dark leafy greens (romaine, arugula or spinach) instead of iceberg lettuce. Add protein-rich skinless chicken, fish, hard-boiled egg or low-fat cheese. Use olive oil-based vinaigrettes and limit servings to 2 tablespoons or less.

### Better lunches in the fast-food lane:

- ✔ Pick steamed or sautéed vegetables (not fried) as a main entrée instead of a garnish.
- ✔ Take small portions, except for vegetables.
- ✔ Replace deep-fried fare with roasted or grilled items.
- ✔ Skip salty sauces such as soy, BBQ and teriyaki.
- ✔ Choose brown rice, quinoa (keen-wa) or another whole grain instead of white rice or pasta.
- ✔ Drink water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages.



EASY | RECIPE
From Personal Best®

## Gazpacho with Whole-Grain Orzo

*Cool soup with summer-fresh ingredients.*

- 4 cups chopped fresh **tomatoes**
- ⅔ cup cooked whole-grain **orzo pasta**
- 1 cup diced **cucumber**
- 1 cup diced **orange bell pepper**
- 1 cup **water**
- ¼ cup minced **shallots**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh **basil** or **mint**
- 1 tbsp **olive oil**
- 1 tsp **hot pepper sauce**
- Juice of 1 **lime**

Purée 2 cups of tomatoes 20 seconds in blender. Pour into large bowl with remaining ingredients. Cover and chill at least 2 hours. Top with sliced avocado or cooked prawns; add salt and pepper to taste.

**Makes 7 cups. Per cup:**
83 calories | 6.8g protein | 2.5g total fat | .3g sat fat | 1.4g mono fat | .3g poly fat | 0mg cholesterol | 16.5g carb | 3.9g sugar | 4g fiber | 11mg sodium

## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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# News & Notes

■ **Eligibility Verification Extension*:** The City wants every eligible dependent to stay on City benefits. *If you didn't submit your documents* or are in the process of doing so, you have some additional time. The due date has been extended to **August 29**.

Please don't hesitate to contact Aon Hewitt at **1-800-725-5810** if you:

✔ Have any questions
✔ Need help logging into the web site
✔ Are having any issues finding your documents
✔ Need assistance in a non-English language

If you sent in your documents - thank you for getting them in!

*Does not apply to employees without dependents or employees who are members of Seattle Fire Fighters Local 27.

■ **Open Enrollment for 2015:** Make benefit choices Monday, October 6 through Friday, October 31. Check your home mail in September.

top safety

# Amusement Parks: Safety 101

**Like millions of people, you may be heading out to an amusement park this summer.** Follow these tips to stay safe on the rides:

✔ Obey age, height, weight and health restrictions listed at each ride.

✔ Keep hands, arms, legs and feet inside the ride at all times.

✔ Make sure seat belts, shoulder harnesses and lap bars are secure. Hold onto handrails, when provided.

✔ Don't attempt to loosen restraints or other safety devices.

✔ Remain seated until the ride comes to a complete stop.

✔ Listen to the ride operator's instructions.

>>Finally, enjoy yourself - safely.

# Get Smart About Antibiotics

➡ Continued from page 1.

The CDC reported that prescribing practices for antibiotics vary widely in the U.S., and it has launched an initiative this year to ensure improved controls. Meanwhile, follow these guidelines:

**Don't insist on an antibiotic prescription when you have a viral infection.** Antibiotics offer little or no benefit against colds, the flu and other illnesses caused by viruses. Instead, ask your health care provider about ways to relieve your symptoms – for instance, a saline nasal spray to help clear congestion.

**Those bacterial infections that respond to antibiotics** include bladder, staph, strep throat, many skin and some ear infections, as well as severe sinus infections.

**Use your antibiotics correctly.** Take **all** of the medicine, even if you (or your child) feel better. A shortened course of antibiotics often wipes out only the most vulnerable bacteria while allowing more resistant bacteria to survive. These resistant bacteria may cause more serious infections in the future.

expert advice

*By Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP*

## Q: Do I need a flu shot?

**A: The answer for most people is a resounding "yes."** The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for nearly everyone 6 months or older. Influenza vaccines help give protection against the 3 or 4 viruses expected to be most prevalent in the coming season. These viruses can make even healthy people very sick and lead to thousands of hospitalizations and deaths every year.

A few people cannot get the flu shot. Talk to your health care provider if you have a history of allergic reactions to the vaccine components, have had the paralytic illness Guillain-Barre syndrome, or you are moderately or severely ill. The vaccine is not approved for children less than 6 months old.

For everyone else, the best time for vaccination against seasonal flu is autumn. Your protection starts in 1 to 2 weeks and generally lasts at least 6 to 8 months.

***Look for City flu shot program dates in September!***