

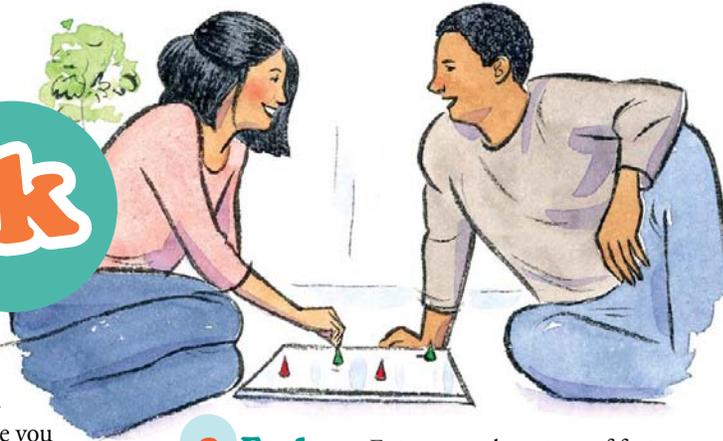
# Take Charge!



Providing information and ideas for City employees and their families on how to improve health and wellness

NOVEMBER 2009 **This issue** ▶ Cut Calories 13 Ways ▶ Stop, Thief! ▶ Driving Drowsy ▶ Prevent Diabetes ▶ Smart Snacking

## Pep Talk



The holiday season is festive and fun – and hectic. Extra demands of the day can leave you weary, worn out and yearning for a nap. Here are 5 energy boosters to the rescue:



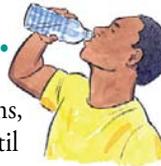
**1. Don't cheat on sleep.** If you routinely deprive yourself of sleep, you'll pay for it with fatigue. Adults need 7-9 hours a day; even an extra hour of sleep can dramatically improve energy. *Tip:* The best way to improve sleep is to maintain a firm time for going to bed and awakening.

**2. Get physical.** Research indicates exercise is one of the best ways to increase energy. Avoid strenuous workouts that might overly tire you; moderate activities such as walking are ideal. Increase your effort gradually to build strength and endurance. Progress to 30-60 minutes of moderate physical activity most days of the week. *Tip:* You can accumulate this time in segments as brief as 10 minutes.



**3. Fuel up.** Enjoy several servings of fruits and vegetables every day. The nutrients in produce help energize you – and they have far fewer calories than heavy, high-calorie snacks and most fast food.

**4. Drink to your health.** Dehydration is another energy thief – it reduces blood flow to your organs, including your brain. Don't wait until you're thirsty. When you exercise or perspire heavily, drink plenty of water. *Tip:* Alcohol also contributes to dehydration by causing you to urinate more and in any form reduces your mental and physical response and energy.



**5. Reduce stress.** Rushing to cross everything off your list can be exhausting. Slow down and set priorities so you only do essential things. Set aside time each day to relax. On-the-go techniques such as deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation can revive you. *Tip:* Remember to have fun rather than waste energy trying to make everything perfect.

*Note:* Seek medical care if your fatigue is accompanied by fever, weight loss, other signs of illness, or unexplained muscle weakness; or is severe or persists beyond 2 weeks.

### Wellness Events

#### Survival Guide to Holiday Eating

**November 4**  
12 noon - 1:00 pm  
Seattle Municipal Tower  
Room 1600

**November 24**  
12 noon - 1:00 pm  
Seattle Municipal Tower  
Room 1600

#### Seasonal Flu Shot Clinic

**November 5**  
7:30 am - 4:30 pm  
Seattle Municipal Tower  
Room 4050/4060

### Featured Benefit

Smokers have less resistance to swine flu and are more likely to be sicker than those who don't smoke. The Great American Smokeout™ on November 19 is your opportunity to join others in taking a step toward health by quitting tobacco.

The confidential Quit For Life® Program is **free** to City employees with medical benefits and covered dependents age 18 and over. By participating, your chances of quitting will be **8 times greater** than trying to quit on your own.

Call 1.866.QUIT.4.LIFE (1-866-784-8454).

### NOVEMBER GOAL

November 19 is the Great American Smokeout.

If you smoke, join millions of Americans who choose this day to quit tobacco.



**SUBSCRIBERS:** Find more tips on everyday wellness available at Well Connections:  
[www.personalbest.com/Extras/bbwc1109](http://www.personalbest.com/Extras/bbwc1109)

# STOP, Thief!

The Web isn't the only place where thieves can steal your identity. Skilled identity thieves have many ways of gathering your private information. Watch out for these ploys:



**Mailbox theft.** Some thieves can take all the information they need from your mailbox by stealing bank and credit card statements, preapproved credit offers, checks or tax information. Best bet: Have a trusted neighbor get your mail if you're gone for more than one day. Drop your bills into a U.S. postal mailbox instead of leaving them for the mail carrier (or a thief).



**Trash sifting.** Thieves will look through your trash to obtain bills or other documents with your personal information on it. Best bet: Shred everything before discarding or recycling.



**Changing your address.** There are thieves who will go as far as completing a change of address form to divert your billing statements and personal information to another address. Best bet: Track your bills. If you haven't received a bill in a timely manner, don't jump for joy – call the billing company.



**Pretexting.** This is the practice of getting personal information under false pretenses. For example, criminals may call and pretend they're with your bank to acquire your social security number and birth date. They then use this information to access your personal finances. Best bet: Never give out personal information at a website over the phone or via e-mail.



**Stealing.** Thieves can steal your identification by robbing your home or stealing your purse or wallet. Best bet: Carry only what you need in your purse or wallet. Secure other credit cards at home in a safe.

## Calorie Cutting – 13 Easy Ways

Losing weight can be challenging. Believe it or not, you can shed pounds and still enjoy eating.

Instead of cutting out food, cut portion sizes, and choose lighter alternatives. Here are 13 tried and true calorie-trimming tricks:

1. Replace a 2-ounce bag of potato chips with 1 cup of plain popcorn to save 141 calories.
2. For about 125 to 150 calories less, sip on mineral water with a lime twist instead of a glass of wine or beer.
3. Cut 30 to 60 calories per tablespoon by using reduced-fat mayonnaise instead of regular.
4. Reduce the size of your meat portions from 6 ounces to 3, about the size of a deck of cards.
5. Replace your doughnut or cinnamon bun with a whole-grain English muffin.
6. Dining out: Choose baked, broiled or grilled chicken or fish rather than red meat or deep-fried foods. Try vegetarian pizza with less cheese.
7. Replace a candy bar with a banana for more nutrition and about 100 fewer calories.
8. Choose canned fruit packed in natural juice rather than syrup.

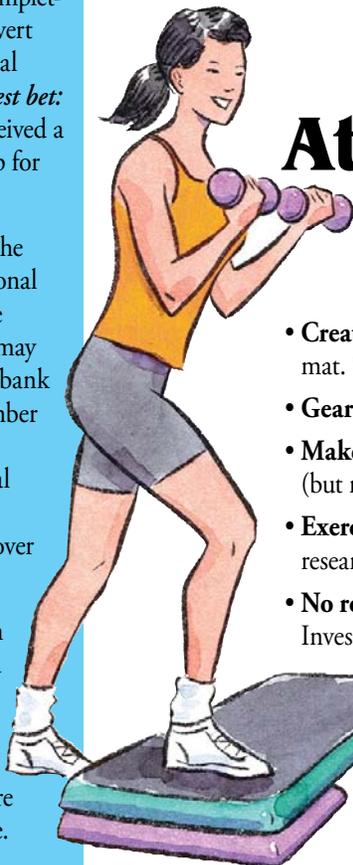


9. Limit peanut butter to 1 tablespoon per sandwich.
10. Split your dessert with a friend.
11. Replace a can of regular cola with a can of diet cola or a tall glass of water.
12. Steam your vegetables rather than sauté them in oil or butter.
13. Have a low-calorie day to save up for a treat – dessert, dinner out or a special occasion.

### MORE TIPS:

You can include 100 to 200 calories' worth of treats in your daily menu plan, depending on your nutritional needs and overall calorie limit for healthy weight. And try a new cookbook that emphasizes *flavor* instead of *fat* for fewer calories. Remember, eating is about health *and* pleasure.

If you like to eat, **get moving.** Burning an extra 1,000 calories each week in planned exercise can help you drop ¼ to ½ pound a week. Any activity helps. The key is frequency.



## At Home with Exercise

Let's face it – gyms and group exercise aren't for everyone. If you're the type who'd rather work up a sweat in the comfort of your home, here's how to make the most of your personal gym:

- **Create a dedicated space.** Post a "work zone" sign, or cover the area with a rubber mat. Stake your territory and you will most likely use it.
- **Gear up.** Choose shoes and clothing appropriate for your needs.
- **Make exercise a pleasure.** Yes, you can. Get moving to your favorite show or to music (but not too loud – protect your hearing).
- **Exercise to TV fitness programs or DVD routines.** There are many choices: You can research reviews on the Web to find ones best suited for you.
- **No room for equipment?** You can do pushups, crunches, jogging in place, or dancing. Invest in portable, inexpensive exercise bands, hand weights, a step bench or yoga mat.

*Note:* Gradually progress to 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week. Get your provider's advice first if you have a medical condition or are new to exercise.

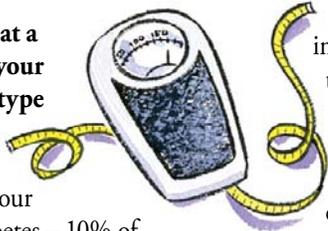
Home exercise can be as effective as a gym workout with the added benefits of privacy and saving money and commute time. Running out of excuses?

# Surprising Ways to Prevent Diabetes

**K**eeping your blood sugar at healthy levels isn't just a matter of genetics or avoiding sweets. Scientists are closing in on key lifestyle factors that appear to increase risk for developing type 2 diabetes, a potentially disabling and fatal disease. But diabetes is often preventable. Consider these recent developments in diabetes research:

## You may have heard that a healthy weight lowers your chances of developing type 2 diabetes.

What you may not know is that dropping 5 to 10% of your weight may prevent diabetes – 10% of 180 pounds is 18 pounds. The best prescription for reaching and maintaining a healthy weight: Watch what you eat (see at right) and get regular exercise.



## Puffing on cigarettes may not be the first habit that comes to mind in connection with preventing diabetes.

However, smoking raises blood sugar levels – a warning sign for diabetes. Scientists believe smoking may cause insulin resistance (the body's inability to use insulin properly) by affecting the pancreas, which makes insulin.

If you smoke, it's worth your health to quit – you not only reduce your type 2 risk, but lower your chances of developing heart disease, cancer and other conditions.



Another factor scientists are focusing on is **shuteye**. Data from a federal health and nutrition survey of nearly 9,000 people suggests getting an average of 5 hours or less of sleep daily raises diabetes risk. One



theory: Too little sleep may increase insulin resistance and lower glucose tolerance, setting the stage for unhealthy blood sugar levels.

If you have trouble getting enough sleep, talk to your provider. Regular exercise and cutting back on caffeine also help.

## And then there's the question of carbohydrates.

When it comes to lowering your diabetes risk, complex carbs with a low-glycemic load, such as fiber-rich whole grains, win the food fight. Their high-fiber content allows a slower rise in blood sugar than their high-glycemic cousins – simple, refined carbs such as white bread and white rice.

Another diabetes fighter, magnesium, found in nuts, whole grains, leafy greens and beans, may reduce the body's ability to resist insulin.



*The good news:* These diabetes risk factors are all controllable – and it's never too late to quit smoking, get more sleep, eat better or shed pounds. Change is often difficult, but your health is worth it.

# Driving Drowsy

**E**ach year, highway fatalities increase during the holidays, according to the National Highway Traffic Administration.

Whether you're trying to avoid the crowds by traveling in off-peak hours, or you're part of the holiday traffic migration this year, stay awake and aware on the road.

## You may be too drowsy to drive if you:

- Can't focus on the road.
- Yawn and blink frequently or your eyes feel heavy.
- Daydream or your thoughts wander.
- Forget the last few miles driven.
- Miss exits or traffic signs.
- Can't keep your head up.
- Drift into other lanes, or hit the shoulder.
- Feel restless and irritable.



## Nodding off? The National Sleep Foundation

**suggests:** A 10-to 20-minute break at a rest stop to get out and stretch or take a nap or, with your provider's okay, consuming caffeine equal to 2 cups of coffee.

## MIND YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

# Job Performance & Self-Esteem

**What sets top performers apart?** They think "yes" regardless of circumstances. These winners find ways to get things done, whether it's tackling a difficult project at work or resolving a troubling issue at home.

That's not to say take-charge types never get discouraged – they do. The difference? They're confident things will work out.

## Do you have confidence to succeed?

Check the boxes that describe you:

- I give myself credit.** I think of positive events in my life as a direct result of my talents.
- I put setbacks in perspective.** When I have a bad day, I put it behind me and move on.
- I focus on my strengths.** I know it's important to own up to my mistakes. But I also celebrate my successes and feel good about them.
- I take one step at a time.** If the big picture overwhelms and worries me, I focus on the next task, conversation, project or event.
- I view failures as opportunities.** I learn and improve from mistakes.
- I trust my instincts.** I avoid second-guessing my decisions.
- I am confident.** I smile, hold my head up, and look people in the eye.
- I surround myself with upbeat people.** A winning attitude is infectious.

## If you checked all 8, good for you!

If you left some of the boxes blank, look at how you approach problems and life in general. Roadblocks to success, such as fear, doubt and low self-esteem, can keep you from reaching your full potential.

**Life is full of hurdles** – but we can jump them by changing our attitude. Start each day with a big vote of confidence for *you*. Keep our inner chatter positive by saying to yourself: ① Today is a great day in my life. ② I am strong, capable and ready to win. ③ I can handle anything. ④ Nothing can get me down. ⑤ I'm proud of my success.

*Final thought:* Even if you don't always feel your best, getting to "great" is achievable. Don't be afraid to think big!

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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All City of Seattle employees with City medical benefits and their covered dependents age 18 and over can maintain a secure, electronic personal health record through their medical plan. Features include personalized messages and alerts, a detailed health history, and integrated information and resources.

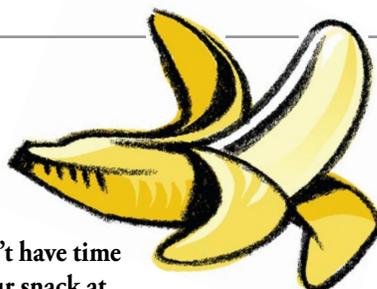
- **Set up your personal health record:**
  - **Aetna:** Go to your account at [www.aetnavigators.com](http://www.aetnavigators.com); click on *Personal Health Record*.
  - **Group Health:** Go to your account at [www.ghc.org](http://www.ghc.org); select *Online Medical Record*.
- **Add prior health events and non-claim health information:** Add your health history, family history, non-prescription drugs and vitamins to create a full record of your health.
- **Bring or email a summary to your health care provider,** so they have a complete record of your health.

Once you set up your personal health record, your Aetna or Group Health claims data will automatically be added to it.

# Smart Snacking

Research shows snacking between meals, or eating 4-5 small meals throughout the day, may have advantages over eating just 2 or 3 larger meals without snacking. Eating nutrient-dense foods frequently can aid blood sugar, boost metabolism, manage hunger and reduce bingeing. They help weight control too: Refueling with a healthy snack may stop you from taking second helpings at your next meal, and dramatically cut your calorie intake.

**The perfect snack is high in nutrition (nutrient-dense) and volume but low in calories.** To keep hunger at bay and provide long-term energy, include some carbohydrates, fiber, protein, and a little fat. Look for choices that offer at least 5 grams of protein and about 5 grams of fiber per serving.



**Don't have time to fix your snack at home?** Keep nuts, dried fruit, or whole-grain crackers in your glove box or office. Keeping pre-made snacks on hand helps you avoid the vending machine down the hall or the pastry case at the coffee shop next door.

Energy bars? They are generally high in calories, so check labels for lighter brands. And choose those with 3-5 grams of fiber and 5-10 grams of protein, no saturated fat, and fewer than 20 grams of sugar.

## Have a Slice Without the Price



**Pizza is a favorite.** It's delicious, convenient and made to order. The downside is that it's often loaded with calories. Consider this: It takes about 40 minutes of biking at a moderate pace to burn the 300-plus calories in a single slice of pizza.

**A nicer slice:** pizza with veggies, not pepperoni. Whether you're eating out or making your own at home, here's how you can enjoy a slice without blowing your diet.

- Eat one slice and have a salad on the side.
- Remove some of the grease on top with a napkin.
- Choose toppings such as vegetables instead of fatty meats or extra cheese.
- Choose thin-crust pizza, and leave the outer crust.

Recipe of the Month

# Cranberry Oat Muffins

- 1 cup whole fresh cranberries
- 2 tbsp white sugar
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/3 cup light tub margarine
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar substitute
- 1/4 cup egg substitute
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts

- 1 Combine cranberries and sugar; set aside 45 minutes.
- 2 Combine oats and buttermilk in separate bowl.
- 3 In large bowl, mix margarine, brown sugar and egg.
- 4 In a third bowl, mix flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
- 5 Combine all ingredients, including walnuts, gently adding cranberries. Drop into baking cups and bake at 400°F for 25 minutes.

### Nutrition Facts

MAKES 20 MUFFINS

Amount Per Muffin	Calories	123
	Protein	2.8g
	Total Fat	5.4g
	Carbohydrate	15g
	Fiber	1g
	Sodium	202mg

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### Some Snack Samples:

- A small sandwich
- A side salad with a cup of low-sodium soup
- Baked tortilla chips with fat-free refried beans, reduced-fat cheese and salsa
- Baby carrots with low-fat ranch-style dip
- Celery sticks with a dab of peanut butter
- A pear with reduced-fat cheese
- Fruit topped with low-fat granola or cottage cheese
- A bunch of grapes
- Yogurt and nuts



**Prepare snacks in advance.** Buy bags of pre-cut vegetables and fruits – slice up some favorites for added zing to your morning or afternoon pick-me-up. Store small portions of healthy leftovers in small containers you can toss in your lunch bag.