

# TAKE CHARGE!



for health and living

November 2012

self-care

## Quitting Smoking?

Expect many good things ahead.

Most tobacco users say the No. 1 reason they quit is to improve their health. It's a very good reason, since about half of smokers who keep smoking will die from a smoking-related illness. That accounts for nearly 20% of all deaths in the U.S.

When you quit, you lower your risk for many health problems, including several cancers, heart attack, stroke, emphysema, macular degeneration, chronic gum disease, premature bone loss and skin wrinkles.

If you have a chronic illness, such as diabetes or high blood pressure, quitting will quickly improve your symptoms. Quitting can also affect other people's health – not only family and friends but anyone exposed to the hazards of cigarette smoke.

For help quitting now, visit *Quit for Life* at [quitnow.net](http://quitnow.net). See page 4.



November 15 is the Great American Smokeout!

**Beyond better health, you can expect several immediate benefits.** Start by saying goodbye to everyday hassles:

- Searching for places to smoke.
- Making sudden trips to buy smokes.
- Being nagged by others to quit.
- Stressing about offending others.
- Feeling trapped by your habits.

Most quitters experience some level of nicotine withdrawal, but not for long – the nicotine cravings last briefly and gradually weaken. Stay with it and enjoy your new-found freedom.

## city events

### Deferred Comp. - Active Vs. Passive Investing

Thursday, November 1  
12 noon - 12:45 pm  
SMT Room 4080

### Preparing Your Child for College Webinar

Tuesday, November 6  
12 noon - 1:00 pm  
At Your Desk  
Registration - watch email

### Low Back Pain

Wednesday, November 7  
12 noon - 1:00 pm  
SMT Room 4050

### Emotional Eating - The Food/Mood Connection

Tuesday, November 13  
12 noon - 1:00 pm  
SMT Room 4050

### Deferred Comp. Enrollment

Thursday, November 15  
12 noon - 12:45 pm  
SMT 4080

### Depression in Families Webinar

Tuesday, November 27  
12 noon - 1:00 pm  
SMT Room 4050  
Registration - watch email

### Blood Pressure Screening

Wednesday, November 28  
Stop by between 10:30 & 1:30  
SMT Room 4096

### Women and Investing 401 - Deferred Compensation

Wednesday, November 28  
12 noon - 12:45 pm  
Room 4020  
Register at 206-447-1924

HEALTH OBSERVANCE  
November is American Diabetes Month.

## 10 Ways to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes

You can do a lot to prevent type 2 diabetes. Type 2 is the body's inability to use insulin properly. Insulin helps your body use glucose from food for energy. Type 2 is the most common form of diabetes, which causes several disabling health problems.

Even small changes can make a big difference in preventing type 2. Try these:

- 1 **Ask your health care provider** about your potential risk, especially if you are obese or have reached age 45.
- 2 **Stop smoking.** Tobacco use harms your overall health.
- 3 **Get enough sleep.** Too little – an average of 5 hours or less – may increase insulin resistance and lower glucose tolerance.



Continued on page 4 ➡



“In health there is freedom. Health is the first of all liberties.”  
~ Henri Frederic Amiel

## Dollars & \$ense: Groceries for One

If you buy food for only yourself, here's how to navigate your supermarket.



**\$ Study weekly circulars.** The easiest way to save money and plan your meals is to look at the weekly grocery store circulars before shopping. Also ask the store if you can sign up for email alerts announcing sales.

**\$ Make weekly meal plans.** Base your shopping list on your plan and stick to it. Always take your list with you.

**\$ Stock up on easy meal items.** It's good to have simple things on hand to prepare when you don't want to cook. Soup, canned produce and bags of chopped vegetables all take the work out of preparing a meal.

**\$ Buy smaller portions of perishable foods.** You don't save money buying larger portions or packages if you end up throwing most of it away.

**\$ Schedule shopping.** A routine will keep you from popping into the store and buying items you don't need. And never hit the supermarket aisles when you're hungry – you're more likely to buy impulsively.



*Jamie Lynn Garrett is an Accredited Financial Counselor as well as a Professor in Practice and the Director of Financial Planning Programs at the University of Southern Mississippi.*



## Take a Deep Breath – Here's help for your lungs.

**You may be surprised to learn that COPD is the 3rd leading cause of death in the U.S.** About 24 million Americans suffer from COPD – chronic obstructive pulmonary disease – also known as emphysema and chronic bronchitis. This disease obstructs airflow and over time makes breathing very hard.

The primary cause is inhaling cigarette smoke. COPD isn't curable, but it's preventable and can be treated and managed well, especially if diagnosed early.

**It's time to get tested if you have symptoms:** chronic coughing and wheezing, shortness of breath during everyday activities, chest discomfort, and feeling like you can't breathe well or take a deep breath.

*breathe deeply*

**During COPD Awareness Month,** make an appointment with your health care provider to discuss your symptoms and general health. The COPD test is simple and quick. If someone you love is a current or a former smoker with symptoms, urge them to get tested too.

**If you're diagnosed with COPD, the best way to feel better is to restore the health of your lungs.** Start by quitting smoking and using medication properly. Work closely with a provider who understands your needs and communicates well. Discuss a physical activity plan and pulmonary rehabilitation – both can help rebuild your strength and improve your breathing.



November is COPD Awareness Month.

### fit in fitness



## Cold Weather Workouts

Do you head inside when the temperature drops below 40°F, and not venture out again until spring? Our instinct is to avoid the cold. Going for a walk in chilly air may not be your idea of fun. Consider these benefits of wintry outdoor exercise.

**Your body likes a change of pace.** Exercising indoors for months can get boring. Why not break up the monotony? You may find the cool air invigorating.

**You have to increase your exercise pace to stay warm outside in cold weather.** The benefit? You burn more calories. Cold-weather workouts also can enhance your performance because you're working a little harder.

**Your mind could use some fun.** Get out and soak up the elements again with renewed appreciation – the falling leaves and wind-blown trees, even the rain and snowfall.

**Enjoy outdoor activity 4 to 5 times a week.** But stay safe: Warm up indoors first; watch your step if it's slippery; don't exercise if frostbite is a risk.





Give thanks for good food.

best bites

Celebrate Thanksgiving with traditional fresh ingredients from America's original 1621 harvest. Historians suggest native birds, game, fish and shellfish were featured, surrounded by English crops such as turnips, cabbage, parsnips, onions, carrots and herbs. Other foods on the menu: squash, beans and several native fruits, including plums, melons, grapes and cranberries. Pumpkin may have been there – but not in pie. Serve some of these foods close to their wholesome state, and savor their natural, unprocessed quality.

nutrition watch

– Cara Rosenbloom, RD

# Diabetes Prevention on Your Plate

Your blood sugar level fluctuates throughout the day. It's usually lowest in the morning and rises after each meal in response to food. Through these normal ups and downs, it still stays within a specific target range.

**Here are some nutrition tips to keep blood sugar levels stable and shed excess weight:**

- ✓ Eat smaller portions at all meals and snacks.
- ✓ Choose foods with less fat, sugar and salt.
- ✓ Cook more. Eat fewer processed and packaged foods.
- ✓ Eat fruits that contain soluble fiber, such as apples, pears, oranges and berries. Soluble fiber helps delay the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream.
- ✓ Enjoy non-starchy vegetables with every meal. They are low in calories and high in vitamins and have little effect on blood sugar levels.
- ✓ Swap refined grains for whole-grain oats and hulled barley. They contain fiber, which helps delay carbohydrate absorption and the resulting rise in blood sugar.
- ✓ Replace meat with kidney beans, lentils, chickpeas and soy products a few times a week.
- ✓ Drink water instead of sugary beverages.
- ✓ Include fish in your meals 2 to 3 times a week.



self-care

## Winterize Your Skin

You may notice your skin feeling drier during cold winter weather – it's a common problem, especially with more time spent indoors where the air lacks humidity. To reduce dry, flaky skin:

- 💧 **Avoid bathing in hot water.**  
Take shorter, cooler showers.
- 💧 **Use mild or less soap** to reduce washing away natural oils that prevent dryness.
- 💧 **Apply moisturizer daily** after bathing to help keep skin moist and supple.
- 💧 **Turn down the indoor heat.**  
Your skin may do better if your house is cooler.
- 💧 **Wear gloves** when using abrasive cleansers.



**Did you know?** Studies have shown that losing even 5% to 10% of your body weight can help control blood sugar. Good nutrition habits and 30 minutes of regular physical activity on most days of the week will help you manage your weight and reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.



### Cherry-Pecan Baked Pears

A little holiday dessert packed with big flavors.

From Personal Best®

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 3 semi-ripe pears, such as Bosc, peeled, halved and cored | 1 tbsp orange juice               |
| 1/3 cup dried tart cherries                               | 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon           |
| 4 tbsp pecans, coarsely chopped                           | 1 1/2 cups white grape juice      |
| 1 tbsp brown sugar  | 3/4 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt |
|   | 2 tsp honey                       |

1. Place pear halves cut side up snugly in dish.
2. Combine cherries, pecans, brown sugar, orange juice and cinnamon; divide mixture evenly among pear halves, pressing gently on top of each.
3. Drizzle grape juice around and on top of pears; cover loosely. Place in 350°F oven and bake 35-40 minutes, or until tender.
4. Meanwhile, combine yogurt and honey; keep chilled until serving.
5. Serve pears warm with a spoonful of honey yogurt.

**MAKES ABOUT 4 servings. Per serving:**

160 calories | 3.8g protein | 3.5g total fat | .2g sat fat | 1.8g mono fat | 1g poly fat  
| 1mg cholesterol | 30g carbs | 25g sugar | 2.7g fiber | 12.8mg sodium



## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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## Get a start on healthy holidays! Discover these City programs.



Quit For Life® Program

### Tobacco Cessation: Celebrate the Great American Smokeout.

*Quit for Life* Program is a free quit tobacco program available to you and covered dependents age 18 and older. Call a Quit Coach to discuss a quit date and nicotine replacement therapy. Enroll: 1-866-784-8454; more information at [quitnow.net](http://quitnow.net).



### Weight Management: Concerned about high blood pressure?

City employees and their covered adult dependents can participate in Weight Watchers and receive special pricing for selected services. Enroll at [wellness.weightwatchers.com](http://wellness.weightwatchers.com) with Employer ID: 62344, Employer Passcode: WW62344. More information at [seattle.gov/personnel/benefits/home.asp](http://seattle.gov/personnel/benefits/home.asp).



### Employee Assistance Program: Life issues?

You and your household members have up to six in-person counseling visits per issue per year at no cost. Contact: 1-888-272-7252; [www.horizoncarelink.com](http://www.horizoncarelink.com) (user name: city of seattle; password: city of seattle).

## top safety

### 5 Essential Winter Driving Tips

When heading out, check the forecast. Don't travel if snow and ice are expected unless it's absolutely necessary. If you must travel, here are 5 tips to prevent accidents:



**1 Be prepared.** Check your windshield wipers and tires and replace if worn. Bring a charged cell phone, shovel, blankets, sand or salt, ice scraper, and flares if you're heading out on a long road trip. Be sure to tell others about your travel plans. Tire chains may be necessary in some areas.

**2 Drive slowly.** Driving too fast for conditions is the leading reason drivers lose control in winter driving conditions. Tip: Use hazard lights if you're driving below the posted speed limit.

**3 Keep back.** Allow at least 3 times more space than usual between you and the vehicle in front of you.

**4 Avoid skids.** Use a light touch on brakes to avoid skidding. If you begin to skid, ease off brakes and turn in the direction of the skid.

**5 Be alert.** You can't always see the ice on the road. That's why it's important to drive slowly and keep control of your vehicle.

## expert advice

— Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP

### Q: Who is at risk for esophageal reflux?



**A:** Many people experience a sour taste in the mouth or a burning sensation in the chest from time to time. When these symptoms occur more than once a week or interfere with daily activities, the condition is called gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). People who smoke; are pregnant or overweight; or have diabetes, asthma, or delayed emptying or herniation of the stomach are more likely to develop the disorder.

The flow of stomach acid backward into the esophagus causes the sour taste and heartburn. To alleviate acid reflux symptoms, take self-care steps. Avoid foods that may trigger heartburn such as caffeine, alcohol, fatty foods, tomatoes and mint. Eat small, frequent meals. Don't lie down for 3 to 4 hours after eating. Avoid tight-fitting clothing. And don't smoke.

If your symptoms keep coming back or persist, see your provider for an evaluation for GERD.

### 10 Ways to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes

➔ Continued from page 1.

- 4 Try to fit in** multiple small meals and nutritious snacks at regular times throughout the day. This promotes steady energy and blood sugar levels.
- 5 Plan for daily balanced nutrition** with 3 ounces of whole grains, 2 cups of fruit, 2½ cups of vegetables, and 5 to 6 ounces of lean meat, poultry or seafood.
- 6 Enjoy slow carbohydrates.** High-fiber breads and whole grains produce a slower rise in blood sugar than do their highly processed cousins – refined breads and pasta – that are typically low in fiber.
- 7 Move more every day.** Activity helps your insulin work better.
- 8 Read food labels on packaged products.** Choose options low in added saturated fat and sugars.
- 9 Ask your provider** to help you define an action plan.
- 10 Make sure these changes** can fit well into your daily life. Given time, you'll like the results and even enjoy your new habits.

**Take these tips seriously** if you have been diagnosed with prediabetes – higher-than-normal blood sugar levels, but not high enough for a type 2 diagnosis. *You can still beat it.*