

TAKE CHARGE!



for health and living

November 2015

city events



take charge

Water Works

Water exercise is among the most enjoyable ways to improve your health. And it improves cardiorespiratory health, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility and, when done regularly, reduces body fat.

- >> **Pool workouts provide a diversion** from jogging, hiking, biking, tennis and other land exercises, especially when you want to avoid jarring weight-bearing actions.
- >> **The buoyancy of water supports your body**, taking the strain off tender joints and creating a calming effect. Yet, the resistance of water is perfect for strength building. As you continually pull and push away the water, you can exercise more strenuously than it seems.
- >> **Besides solo lap swimming**, you'll find group exercise designed for shallow- or deep-water aerobics and muscle workouts using various devices. You can avoid dunking your head with workouts that involve jogging, kicking, lunges and other movements. Or slow the pace with routines inspired by yoga or tai chi for flexibility and balance.
- > **Check out aquatic classes at your health club or YMCA**; visit 1 or 2 in session to see if they suit your fitness level. Once you've learned the basics from a certified instructor, you may advance to more challenging aquatic routines.

Meeting Management

Thursday, November 5
12 noon – 1:00 pm
SMT 4050

Understanding Learning Styles

Tuesday, November 10
12 noon – 1:00 pm *Webinar*
Login: See future email flyer*

Managing Everyday Expenses While Saving for Retirement – Deferred Compensation

Thursday, November 12
12 noon – 12:45 pm
SMT 4080

Managing Everyday Expenses While Saving for Retirement – Deferred Compensation

Tuesday, November 17
12 noon – 12:45 pm
SMT 4080

Holiday Spending Survival Guide

Wednesday, November 18
12 noon – 1:00 pm *Webinar*
Login: See future email flyer*

Free Blood Pressure Screening

Wednesday, November 18
Stop by between 10:30 & 1:30
SMT 4096

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

November is Diabetes Month.

How Diabetes Affects Heart Health

Diabetes is now regarded as the leading risk for heart disease. The link is stronger than many people realize: Cardiovascular disease claims the lives of about two-thirds of diabetes patients.

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■ **Facts about inflammation:** While it's essential to your body's healing system, chronic inflammation may promote cardiovascular disease, arthritis, depression and Alzheimer's. Key irritants are smoking and highly processed foods. Anti-inflammation dietary choices include fruit, nuts, leafy greens and other vegetables, as well as fish and olive oil – all part of the Mediterranean style of eating. Regular exercise helps, too.

5 Ways to Stop Winter Weight Gain



1.

Exercise. Winter weight gain largely results from increased eating and moving too little. Plan for extra physical activity every day and schedule it in your calendar to offset those food splurges.

Cook at home more.

Choose whole vegetables and fruits, as well as whole grains and lean protein, without the excess fat, salt or sugar of heavier restaurant foods.



2.



3.

Avoid alcohol and other empty calories.

An abundance of festive meals, drinks and extra treats can quickly lead to extra weight. Sample, but practice self-control. Stock up on nutritious snacks, such as unsalted nuts and plain, air-popped popcorn.

Weigh yourself weekly.

Those who do often control their weight better.

4.



Choose more whole foods:

fresh vegetables, fruit, legumes, nuts, seeds, whole grains and lean protein. Choose fewer processed and refined foods that are high in sugar, white flour and trans fat. Eat moderate servings until you are just full, and avoid that over-stuffed, too-full feeling.



5.



Keeping Kids Tobacco Free

Why do young girls and boys become attracted to tobacco?

Children are more likely to use tobacco if they:

- ✓ Have parents who use tobacco.
- ✓ Have access to smoking areas and tobacco products – especially low-cost or free tobacco.
- ✓ Have friends or siblings who use tobacco.
- ✓ Watch movies that have smoking in them.
- ✓ Aren't doing well in school or have friends who aren't doing well in school.
- ✓ Aren't engaged in school or extracurricular activities.
- ✓ Use other substances, such as alcohol or marijuana.

Numbers affected: Tobacco use begins primarily during adolescence. Each day in the U.S., an additional 2,100 youth and young adults become daily cigarette smokers. However, between 2011 and 2014, the American Cancer Society reported a decline in smoking among:

- Middle school students – from 4.3% to 2.5%.
- High school students – from 15.8% to 9.2%.

Despite this progress, reducing overall tobacco use remains a significant challenge. For example, other national surveys show **increases in hookah and e-cigarette use since 2011.**

As a parent, you're the biggest influence – keep telling your kids how dangerous and addictive all tobacco products are. Get help at teen.smokefree.gov.

The Great American Smokeout is November 19.



On Your Mind: Anxiety

By Eric Endlich, PhD

Your palms sweat, your heart pounds and it's hard to catch your breath. You may have **anxiety disorder**. Anxiety is an emotion that many of us feel occasionally but others experience so frequently and intensely that it can be disabling.

Anxiety can take the form of:

- **Generalized anxiety disorder**, characterized by uncontrollable worry.
- **Panic disorder**, recurrent attacks of severe anxiety sometimes accompanied by agoraphobia, or avoidance of situations such as crowds and travel.
- **Post-traumatic stress disorder**, triggered by a frightening event such as an assault, a house fire or a car accident.
- **Phobias or fears** such as **social phobia** and **claustrophobia**.
- **Obsessive compulsive disorder**, consisting of upsetting, unwanted thoughts, indecisiveness and compulsive rituals, such as excessive handwashing or repeatedly checking locks or appliances.

People often find that self-help strategies such as yoga, meditation and exercise can reduce their anxiety.

Professional treatments include medication and psychotherapy. While some medications need to be taken daily, others can be used as needed. Therapy techniques may include mindfulness (learning to stay in the present moment), as well as cognitive-behavioral strategies such as muscle relaxation or identifying and challenging irrational thoughts.

However unsettling anxiety can be, it is treatable.



Monday, Monday

Got the Monday morning blues? For those who typically take a weekend break from work, here's how to brighten your Monday back on the job:

>> **Plan ahead.** Before leaving work on Friday, plan your first Monday morning task. By using your morning energy for something productive first thing, you will set a positive tone for the rest of the week.

>> **Lower your expectations.** Don't walk into work after a long weekend or a vacation and expect to catch up on everything in 1 day. Set realistic goals for what you can achieve on Monday, and create a schedule that will leave you feeling accomplished rather than frustrated.

>> **Reward yourself.** Plan a fun, after-work activity on Monday, such as meeting friends, spending time on a hobby or watching your favorite TV show.



Type 2 Diabetes: Diet Does Matter

Type 2 diabetes is a health condition that's strongly linked to what you eat. Making balanced and healthy food choices every day can help you control your blood sugar levels.

Preventing rapid swings in blood sugar is crucial to preventing complications from diabetes, which can include heart disease, eye problems and nerve damage.

What should I eat? Your eating plan is based on individual factors such as gender, weight, blood sugar level, medications and physical activity level. A variety of different dietary patterns have been shown to benefit people with diabetes. Consider working with a registered dietitian who can provide a plan based on your needs.

If you're just getting started, here are some tips to remember until you see your dietitian:

- ✓ Eat 3 meals per day at regular times, spaced no more than 4 to 6 hours apart. You may need a small snack in-between meals.
- ✓ Replace sugary beverages (soft drinks, juice, iced tea, etc.) with water.
- ✓ Enjoy whole grains such as quinoa, barley, oats and brown rice instead of refined grains such as white flour and white rice.
- ✓ Include high-fiber foods in your meals and snacks, such as whole grains, legumes, nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruits.
- ✓ Limit sugars and sweets such as desserts, candies, jam and honey.

Taking control of your eating habits and your weight can significantly lower your risk of future complications from diabetes. *By Cara Rosenbloom, RD*



eating smart



Tip of the Month: Milk

As the nights get cooler, you may enjoy warm milk before bed. Does this ritual actually help promote sleep? Milk contains the sleep-inducing amino acid **tryptophan**, though not enough to trigger sleep. But if you find milk comforting and relaxing before bedtime or anytime, grab a cup of skim or 1% and enjoy it.

— Cara Rosenbloom, RD



Pumpkin-spiced Almonds

EASY | RECIPE

From Personal Best®

- 2 cups whole, unsalted **almonds**
- 1½ tbsp ground **cinnamon**
- 1 tsp ground **ginger**
- ¼ tsp **allspice**
- ¼ tsp ground **cloves**
- ¼ tsp ground **nutmeg**
- 2 tsp **olive oil**



Toast the almonds in a pan over medium heat for about 3 minutes, stirring frequently. Transfer to a bowl. In a small bowl, stir together the spices. Heat oil in a pan over medium heat. Stir the spices into the oil, about 30 seconds. Add the almonds and cook, stirring frequently, until the nuts are coated with the spices, about 3 minutes. Allow to cool before serving.

Makes 8 servings. Per serving:

216 calories | 8g protein | 18g total fat | 2g saturated fat | 12g mono fat | 4g poly fat
| 0mg cholesterol | 8g carbohydrate | 1g sugar | 5g fiber | 0mg sodium

Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

Phone: 800-871-9525

Fax: 205-437-3084

E-mail: editor@personalbest.com

Website: www.personalbest.com

Executive Editor: Susan Cottman • Advisors: Eric Endlich, PhD; ; Mary P. Hollins, MS, JD; Alice Lockridge, MS; Diane McReynolds, past Executive Editor; Zorba Paster, MD; Charles Stuart Platkin, PhD, MPH; Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP • Editorial Assistant: Erin Bishop • Designer: Heather Burke

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Find Health and Wellness Support

- ▶ **Need help with life issues** like managing stress, having a happier relationship, or setting up a personal budget? You and your household members have up to six in-person counseling visits per issue per year at no cost through the **Employee Assistance Program**. Call: **1-888-272-7252**. More resources: www.horizoncarelink.com (user name: city of seattle; password: city of seattle).
- ▶ **Want more energy?** Concerned about high blood pressure? Diabetes? City employees and adult dependents can **participate in Weight Watchers** and receive special pricing for selected services. Enroll at wellness.weightwatchers.com with Employer ID 62344; Employer Passcode: WW62344. More information at seattle.gov/personnel/benefits/home.asp.
- ▶ **Be tobacco free.** Quit for Life is a free quit tobacco program available to you and adult covered dependents. Call a Quit Coach to discuss a quit date and nicotine replacement aids. Enroll: **1-866-784-8454**. More information at quitnow.net.

top safety 7 Habits of Safe Workers

You can set a good example for your coworkers and possibly lower near-miss incidents or accident rates just by being mindful of these 7 safe habits:

1. Know the hazards associated with your job. There are hazards even if you work in an office.
2. Take precautions to avoid hazards by following the rules, reading instructions and keeping your work area clean and organized. Make sure you are trained to do the task at hand.
3. Ask questions if you don't understand instructions or are in doubt about procedures. Never assume or take a guess when it comes to operating machinery.
4. Don't take shortcuts on the job. Hurrying can hurt you and coworkers.
5. Stay focused. Distraction is a major cause of accidents.
6. Wear properly fitted protective gear if your job requires you to do so. Also, use the proper tools for the job.
7. Be proactive. Keep your work area clean and check all areas for hazards before beginning work. Report unsafe conditions immediately.



How Diabetes Affects Heart Health

➔ Continued from page 1.

Most people with diabetes have **type 2**, in which the body doesn't use insulin properly. Type 2 is marked by **high blood sugar**. It also triggers an immune response that causes **chronic inflammation**. Both conditions injure the artery walls, allowing the buildup of cholesterol-laden plaque in the blood vessels, which hinders blood flow and raises the risk for heart attack or stroke.

High blood sugar levels can also lower the body's production of **nitric oxide**, a chemical that helps keep the blood vessels open. The result is reduced blood flow that can lead to blood clots, kidney failure, nerve pain, foot infections, amputation and blindness.

...▶ **If you've been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes**, work with your health care provider to keep your blood sugar levels as close to normal as possible. Tight control of blood sugar can help delay or prevent heart disease and other serious complications, including eye, kidney and nerve damage.

expert advice

— Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP

Q: Waist circumference versus BMI?

A: Taking a waist measurement can provide valuable information about your health and life expectancy.

A waist larger than 40 inches in men, or 35 inches in women, may be a sign of excess **visceral fat** deep in the abdomen.

Visceral fat makes inflammatory substances that increase the risk of death from disorders of the heart, lung and liver, as well as type 2 diabetes and cancer, according to numerous studies. Scientists have observed an increased risk with larger waist size even among people with a normal **body mass index (BMI)**.

Body mass index is derived from height and weight measurements, and is a general indicator of overweight and obesity. But it has limitations. It can't show where extra weight is located or whether it comes from muscle or fat. The measure overestimates fatness in people who are very muscular and underestimates it in people who have lost a lot of muscle mass.