

# TAKE CHARGE!



for health and living

November 2016

## Get Your Waist in Line

The trouble with excess belly fat is more than skin deep. Part of it collects around your internal organs. This visceral fat can produce inflammatory substances that promote cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.



## city events

### Meeting Management

Thursday, November 3  
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm  
SMT 4050

### The Sandwich Generation Webinar

Tuesday, November 15  
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm  
Login: See future email flyer\*

### Free Blood Pressure Screening

Wednesday, November 30  
10:30 am - 1:30 pm  
SMT 4096

\*Or call Central Benefits at 206-615-1340

**What defines excess belly fat?** Measure your waist circumference: Run a tape measure around your torso just above your navel – unhealthy is 40 inches or more for men and 35 inches or more for women. If you exceed these numbers, regardless of your overall weight, it's time to reduce belly fat to protect your health.

There are no special supplements or spot-reducing abdominal workouts that will shrink your waistline. Ongoing, practical habits work best, including:

- » **Lose excess weight** – Cut extra calories from sweets, sugary drinks, alcohol, high-fat foods and oversized servings. Permanent weight loss is key to reducing body fat.
- » **Move more** – Stand up, walk about, stretch, do chores and use your muscles whenever possible. Consistent, daily exercise is essential. Get at least 150 and up to 300 minutes weekly of moderate-intensity physical activity, such as brisk walking, and 2 to 3 days of strength training.
- » **Stress less** – Chronic tension may create hormonal conditions that produce belly fat. Find healthy ways to cope: Avoid things that drain your energy; replace them with positive, relaxing activities.

**Seek your health care provider's guidance** for decreasing excess body fat. You can do it with patience and persistence.

## Best Bites

■ **Practice healthy hygiene at work.** Fight germs that are passed among coworkers when you touch shared objects – chairs, doorknobs, handrails and equipment. Keep your hands clean; wash them often. **First rule:** Don't touch the T-Zone – your eyes, mouth and nose – with your fingers. And avoid others when you're ill.

■ **If you're considering putting a fried turkey on your table for Thanksgiving,** the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends that you buy it from a restaurant or grocery store. The NFPA discourages the use of outdoor, gas-fueled fryers that submerge whole turkeys in hot oil. These devices have led to burns and other injuries, destroyed property and even exploding turkeys.

“High achievement always takes place in the framework of high expectation.” – Jack Kinder



November is Diabetes Month.

## 8 Ways to Stay Well with Type 2 Diabetes

The most common form of diabetes is type 2, in which the body does not use insulin properly. Initially, the pancreas creates extra insulin to make up for it. Eventually, however, your pancreas can't make enough insulin to keep your blood glucose (sugar) level normal. When blood sugar remains above a healthy level, it can trigger serious health problems – from head to toe. ➔ Continued on page 4.





## Tobacco: What Kind of a Quitter Are You?

The majority of tobacco users in the U.S. want to quit. An average of 74% of smokers do, based on Gallup surveys since 1977; 45% have tried at least 3 times. Using the checklist, try to identify the methods most suited to your personality and needs.

### I'm the type of tobacco quitter who prefers to:

- Get all the advice and support possible.
- Have 24/7 online support via mobile apps, social media or text messaging.
- Quit cold turkey.
- Engage in anonymous online forums.
- Enlist a quit partner to exchange ideas.
- Use nicotine replacement therapy.
- Get help with weight control.
- Focus on controlling stress or boredom.
- Focus on improving health in general.
- Keep a journal to monitor nicotine triggers and track progress.



For most people, the best way to quit will be some combination of medicine, emotional support and changing lifestyle habits. Get help from your health care provider, and learn more at <https://smokefree.gov/>.

## Signs of Depression

Depression is a complex disease with many causes. These include inherited traits, hormone changes, traumatic or stressful events, alcohol or drug abuse, and certain medications or health conditions. Also, individual brain chemistry can impact mood, our perceptions and the way we experience life.

Symptoms of depression vary. A classic experience: You feel overwhelmed by sadness and withdrawn from relationships with little interest in normal activities. This mood continues all day, most days, and lasts from weeks to months. Depending on the type of depression, episodes may come and go.



### Symptoms may include:

- low self-esteem or hopelessness.
- feeling guilty or worthless.
- trouble concentrating, talking or performing tasks.
- trouble adjusting to a major setback.
- overeating or loss of appetite.
- oversleeping or insomnia.
- unusual lack of energy.
- suicidal thoughts.

### Your depression may be:

- >> **Mild** – having some symptoms that reduce your effort to do what you need to do.
- >> **Moderate** – having many symptoms that often keep you from doing what you need to do.
- >> **Severe** – having nearly all symptoms that keep you from doing what you need to do.



**Don't let depression discourage you from getting help.** Most people who get treatment rebound emotionally within 4 to 6 weeks.



## Sleep: Don't Get Robbed

America is a nation in need of a good night's sleep. Fifty to 70 million of us suffer from chronic sleep disorders and intermittent sleep problems that can compromise health, safety and alertness.

Ongoing sleep deprivation can affect your mood, energy and performance – and may increase your risk for conditions such as obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, depression and other chronic conditions.

What's keeping you awake? Common culprits include: >>>>>

**Environment:** A warm, noisy or too-bright bedroom can disrupt sleep. Keep your room cool and comfortable. Tune out sounds with earplugs, a portable fan or white noise machine. Use blinds or other window coverings to reduce light. If your pets wake you up, sleep without them.

**Food and drink:** Avoid large meals and liquids (including caffeinated beverages and alcohol) close to bedtime. If you're hungry, choose a light snack (e.g., fruit, whole-grain crackers and cheese). Some medications also make it hard to sleep.

**Physical activity:** While regular exercise can improve your sleep, being active too close to bedtime can make falling asleep more difficult. Schedule physical activity at least 3 to 4 hours before bedtime.

**Electronic devices:** The blue light from smartphones and tablets can trick your body into wakefulness. Shut everything down at least an hour before bedtime and keep them out of your bedroom.

If these measures don't help, talk to your health care provider, who can help you try to get a good night's sleep.

# Avoid These Top Time Management Mistakes

Every day holds the same number of hours. It's how you use them that counts. Avoid time management errors like these:

- **Getting a late start.** Rising just 30 minutes earlier can help you avoid the stress of rushing and gain time for yourself – to exercise or tackle important work before the day's distractions begin.
- **Getting distracted.** Social media, news headlines, email and texting can create constant interruptions. Turn off and tune out electronic distractions to accomplish more.
- **Sacrificing rest.** It's tempting to skip down time and breaks when you are busy, but a few minutes to rest and recharge will help you accomplish more in the long run.
- **Underestimating time.** Spending 45 minutes on a task you scheduled 5 minutes for is a sure way to fall behind on other tasks. Carefully preview the steps and time needed to complete your tasks.
- **Multitasking.** Working on many things at once can create the illusion of being highly productive – but it can rob you of the focus needed to finish what you start. Most efficient: Start, perform and finish 1 task at a time.

**Time management is a skill that helps you avoid rushing and stressing.**

Practiced daily, it can maximize your time by correctly identifying your priorities and how best to fulfill them – and help you maintain a positive attitude.



## Frozen Food Facts

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

Your freezer can be a very useful and versatile kitchen tool. In addition to preserving and saving foods for later, the freezer allows for quick weeknight meals and is the perfect place to store your leftovers.



**Stock your freezer with lots of pre-cut fruits and vegetables.** Frozen vegetables and fruit are safe for up to 1 year. Plus, they cook quickly since they're already in portions. **The best part?** Since vegetables and fruit are frozen within hours of being picked, they often have more antioxidants and vitamins than fresh versions.

**Freeze whole grains, seeds and nuts** to prolong their shelf life and reduce rancidity. You can store nuts for up to 2 years, while grain storage depends on the variety.

**Round out your shelf space with pre-cut portions of chicken, fish and meat.** Why slice them up before freezing? It's hard to cut into frozen food, and thawing adds preparation time. They can last up to 1 year in the freezer.



**Freeze your leftovers.** Having pre-portioned foods you can easily reheat is a great solution for busy weeknights. Soups and stews last about 3 months and meat dishes can last up to 6 months in the freezer – as opposed to only 4 days in the fridge. **Waste not, want not – use your freezer.**



### TIP OF THE MONTH: FREEZING LEFTOVERS?

When wrapping leftovers in foil or storing in freezer bags, label them with the meal name and preparation date so you can identify them later. Use a permanent marker to write on freezer bags, since stick-on labels may become unglued and fall off in cold temperatures.

## VEGETABLE MINISTRONE

**EASY | RECIPE**  
From Personal Best®

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 2 cloves garlic, minced                                | 1 cup whole-grain fusilli or macaroni              |
| 1 tbsp olive oil                                       | 2 cups chopped frozen kale                         |
| 1 cup frozen carrots, diced                            | 3/4 cup frozen cut green beans or broccoli florets |
| 1 can (28 oz.) diced plum tomatoes                     | 1 tbsp each dried oregano and basil                |
| 7 cups water   | 1 tsp salt, or more to taste                       |
| 1 can (15 oz.) no-salt-added red kidney beans, drained |  |

In a large soup pot, sauté garlic in olive oil for 1 minute. Add carrots and sauté 4 minutes. Add tomatoes, water and kidney beans. Bring to a boil. Add fusilli, kale, green beans, herbs and salt. Cook 10-15 minutes, until pasta is tender. Serve, topped with grated Parmesan or chili flakes if desired.

### Makes 6 servings. Per serving:

230 calories | 10g protein | 4g total fat | 0.5g saturated fat | 2g mono fat | 1.5g poly fat | 0mg cholesterol | 44g carbohydrate | 4g sugar | 9g fiber | 467mg sodium

## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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## News & Notes

- **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](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).
- **Need help with life issues** like managing stress, having a happier relationship, 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: <http://www.resourcesforliving.com/> (user name: city of seattle; password: city of seattle).
- **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](http://quitnow.net).

## 8 Ways to Stay Well with Type 2 Diabetes → Continued from page 1.

**The good news?** Managing diabetes leads to good health in general. Here's how:

1. **Watch your blood glucose.** With your provider's guidance, track your blood sugar and keep it within a healthy range.
2. **By maintaining your targets for blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol levels,** you can reduce your risk of heart attack, stroke and kidney failure – illnesses closely linked to diabetes.
3. **Along with weight control, daily exercise** is shown to significantly improve blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol levels.
4. **If you smoke, quit.** It's 1 of the most vital things you can do to prevent heart and kidney disease and stroke, as well as diabetic nerve damage. (See **"Tobacco: What Kind of a Quitter Are You?"** on page 2.)
5. **Check your feet daily.** High blood sugar can reduce blood flow and damage the nerves in your feet. See your provider promptly if your feet have redness, swelling or sores that don't heal.
6. **Have your eyes checked routinely.** Diabetes can damage the eyes' small blood vessels (retinopathy). The first symptom is often reduced vision.
7. **Schedule regular diabetes checkups.** Be ready to discuss your nutrition and activity level and look for any diabetes-related complications such as signs of nerve damage and kidney or heart trouble.
8. **Stay current with vaccines.** High blood sugar can weaken your immune system, which may increase your chances for diseases including flu, pneumonia and hepatitis B.

## Antibiotic Alert

**Antibiotics can be lifesaving medications,** but you need to follow these guidelines when taking them:



- ✓ **Use** as prescribed by your health care provider. Never save antibiotics for later. Take the entire amount even if your symptoms disappear.
- ✓ **Inform** your provider if you are pregnant or think you might be pregnant.
- ✓ **Tell** your provider if you are taking any other prescriptions, over-the-counter medications and supplements, as these may interfere with antibiotics.
- ✓ **Stop** taking antibiotics if you have a serious reaction – a rash, severe diarrhea or vomiting, trouble breathing, numbness – and contact your provider.
- ✓ **Don't** take antibiotics prescribed for another person.
- ✓ **Ask** your provider what you should do if you miss a dose; don't double up on a dose.

*expert advice* – Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP

### Q: Relief for GERD?

**A: Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)** results when stomach acid flows backward into the esophagus, the tube leading from the mouth to the stomach. Acid reflux can create a sour taste or a burning sensation in the chest. Contact your provider if you have GERD symptoms – immediately if you have chest pain since a heart attack sometimes masquerades as heartburn.

**For GERD relief, discuss treatment options with your health care provider.** New habits can also help:

- If you smoke, quit.
- Avoid alcohol, caffeinated beverages, chocolate and mint. Limit fatty, spicy and acidic foods (such as citrus or tomatoes).
- Lose weight. Eat small, frequent meals 4 to 6 times a day.
- Wear loose-fitting clothing.
- Avoid exercising, bending over or straining after eating.
- Don't eat or drink for 3 to 4 hours before bedtime. Raise the head of your bed with 4- to 6-inch blocks.
- Relax at mealtime. It can help improve your digestion.