

TAKE CHARGE!



for health and living

September 2013

Weight-Loss Goals: For Real



health in action

Set small goals. Losing weight, even just a few pounds, can boost your confidence, your energy and your desire to succeed.

Have small, nutritious meals and snacks. It's the best way to keep your energy and metabolism elevated and your appetite low.

Plan every meal and snack. Without a plan, once your hunger strikes, you're very likely to make choices that slow down weight loss.

➔ Continued on page 4.

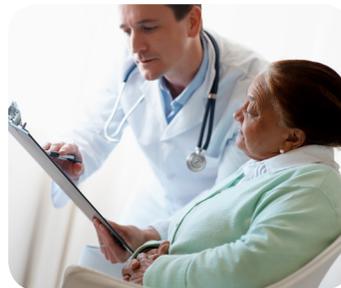
take charge

How to Talk to Your Provider

Open communication with your health care provider is the single best way to improve your treatment and your health. Here's how to make the most of your appointment.

Get ready. List your top 3 or 4 concerns for discussion. Tip: Keep a file to track prior visits, illnesses, treatments and exams, and all medications, including every over-the-counter drug or supplement you are taking. Carry this file to every provider visit.

Speak frankly. Share any related symptoms you can identify, even touchy topics that might embarrass you (such as depression or alcohol use). Don't worry; your provider has likely heard it all before.



Get answers. Listen closely and take notes. Don't hesitate to say, *Can you explain that again?* If you still aren't clear, speak up.

Do what the doctor says. The best way to feel better is to follow instructions for treating your condition. Health outcomes often fail when patients fail to take direction. If you do, inform your provider.

Ask about online services. Many practices use email and online portals to communicate with patients. Patients can monitor their health care privately. It's convenient and saves time.

city events

Target Date Funds – Deferred Compensation

Thursday, September 5
11:00 – 11:45 am SMT 4020
Register at 206-447-1924

Forgiveness: Letting Go to Move Forward Webinar

Thursday, September 12
12 noon – 1:00 pm
Registration: See future email flyer

Dealing With Back Pain

Tuesday, September 17
12 noon – 1:00 pm SMT 4080

What to Do When I Retire – Deferred Compensation

Thursday, September 19
12 noon – 12:45 pm SMT 4080

Women & Investing – Deferred Compensation

Wednesday, September 25
12 noon – 12:45 pm SMT 4020
Register at 206-447-1924

Free Blood Pressure Screening

Wednesday, September 25
Stop by between 10:30 & 1:30
SMT 4096

Brain Health Webinar

Thursday, September 26
12 noon – 1:00 pm
Registration: See future email flyer

New Roth (After Tax) Contribution Option – Deferred Compensation

Wednesday, September 11
12 noon – 1:00 pm SMT 4020
Register at 206-447-1924

Wednesday, September 18
12 noon – 1:00 pm SMT 4080

Tuesday, September 24
12 noon – 1:00 pm SMT 4080



Aspirin: New Uses for an Old Medicine

By Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP



Aspirin has been widely used as an over-the-counter medication for decades. It reduces pain, fever and inflammation. More recent uses of aspirin include these conditions:

Heart disease – Aspirin is often used to prevent heart attacks in people with heart disease or other factors that raise heart attack risk. Emergency personnel may give it to patients with suspected heart attacks.

Stroke – People who have had a transient ischemic attack or ischemic stroke are sometimes advised to take aspirin – either immediately or long

term to prevent a recurrence. But it's not recommended if there is any bleeding in the brain.

Artery disease – Aspirin may prevent clots from forming in small arteries.

Colon cancer – Early evidence suggests aspirin may help prevent the formation of colon polyps and colon cancer.

Always get your provider's OK before taking aspirin. Aspirin isn't for everyone, especially those with conditions such as aspirin allergy or an ulcer. Children and teens with viral infections should not take aspirin.

QuikQuiz™: Focus on Cholesterol



September is Cholesterol Education Month.

How much do you know about this substance that's critical to heart health? Test your knowledge.

True False

- 1. Your body needs cholesterol.
- 2. The best time to begin checking cholesterol levels is age 40.
- 3. You want your cholesterol numbers to show a high LDL and a low HDL and your total cholesterol to stay below 250.
- 4. Lack of exercise is a risk factor for elevated cholesterol.

top fitness

Easy Exercise, Better Health

In 2010, the government released new physical activity guidelines for aerobic (cardio) and muscle-strengthening activities.

AEROBIC exercise involves nonstop, rhythmic activities several times a week. For example, you can walk, jog, swim, play tennis or use an exercise machine. **Here are your guidelines:**

2 hours and 30 minutes per week of moderately intense aerobic activity – such as five 30-minute brisk walks.

OR

1 hour and 15 minutes per week of vigorously intense aerobic activity – such as three 25-minute jogs.

OR

Mix it up – do some moderate and some vigorous activities.

Good to know: You can be active in increments as short as 10 minutes to reach your daily goal.

Strengthen muscles at least twice a week. Try to work all the major muscle groups – legs, hips, back, chest, abdomen, shoulders and arms. Per exercise: Do 1 to 3 sets of 8 to 12 repetitions each – or as many as you can do *with effort in good form*.

At home or in a gym, you can lift weights, use resistance bands, or use your body for resistance (push-ups, chin-ups, sit-ups). Include vigorous gardening or other chores.

Note: Check with your provider before significantly increasing your activity level, especially if you're new to regular exercise or have arthritis, heart or back trouble, or another chronic medical condition.

Regular stretching, the third key to fitness, is essential for flexibility and protection from injury.

Always exercise for 5 to 10 minutes before stretching. Never stretch cold muscles. Hold each stretch position at least 10 to 30 seconds; repeat 2 to 4 times. Stretch your back, side, hip and leg muscles. Stretch slowly and smoothly only to the point of mild strain. Also stretch after you exercise while your muscles are still warm. Bouncing while stretching is not recommended.



ANSWERS:

1. **True** – Cholesterol is a fat-like substance the body needs to function normally. However, too much of the LDL (bad) cholesterol can build up in and block your arteries, putting you at risk for heart disease and stroke.
2. **False** – Experts advise adults to have their cholesterol checked every 5 years starting at age 20.
3. **False** – Desirable cholesterol levels: LDL below 100 mg/dL (optimal), HDL above 40, and triglycerides (a blood fat) below 150. Strive to keep your total cholesterol below 200.
4. **True** – Exercise routinely, lose excess weight, don't smoke, reduce intake of processed foods containing saturated or trans fat, and take prescribed medication.

Strategies for a Smooth Commute



Commute times to and from work are getting longer for some of us. A recent Gallup Poll showed 14% of American workers spend at least 45 minutes getting to work.

Make the trip easier 4 ways:

- 1} Always make driving your No. 1 focus.** Turn off the smartphone. Keep the radio or MP3 player volume down so you can hear traffic and emergency vehicles.
- 2} Team up.** The latest trend is family-style commuting, where couples ride together to gain extra time to converse and connect. This also can work with kids, who may use the ride to talk or read.
- 3} Leave early for work, if possible.** That additional time comes in handy during heavy traffic or unexpected delays during your commute.
- 4} Take the road less traveled.** When possible, avoid major highways in favor of quieter and more interesting side routes. The extra time might be worthwhile if it results in a more pleasurable drive.

Relax and enjoy the down time. Many practiced commuters use driving time for reflection, contemplation and being alone with their thoughts.

best bites

Cooking tip: Lentils

Lentils are little legumes, which are seeds that grow in a pod. Dating as far back as 7,000 BCE, lentils are popular around the globe as a rich source of protein (9 grams per half cup). Also high in fiber and folic acid, they're often used in soups or with rice dishes. Dried lentils cook in 30 to 45 minutes; rinse them well first. Add them to water (in a ratio of 2 cups of water for every 1 cup of lentils). Bring the mixture to a boil, then simmer until tender, and strain off excess water.



September is Fruits and Veggies – More Matters Month.

Fruits and Vegetables – Are you getting enough?

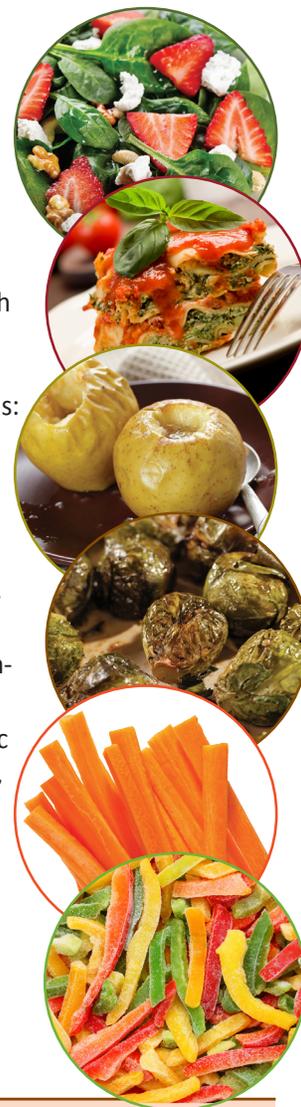
If your plate is always half-filled with vegetables and you snack on fruit between meals, you are likely getting the recommended minimum of 2 cups of fruits and 2½ cups of vegetables you need daily. But many Americans fall short of this goal.

Getting enough vegetables and fruit can help combat high blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, all of which are risk factors for developing heart disease. If you are looking at a plate of beige, add some color with these ideas:

- **Start with salad.** Use dark green leafy lettuces (spinach, romaine, kale) and add your favorite vegetables or fruit on top.
- **Add vegetables where there were none before.** Try layers of meaty mushrooms and eggplant in lasagna, or squash in macaroni and cheese.
- **Enjoy fruit for dessert.** Try tropical fruit salad, cinnamon-baked apples or spiced poached pears.
- **Roast those vegetables.** Add some olive oil and balsamic vinegar to purple cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, beets or broccoli, and cook until tender-crisp about 30 minutes.
- **Keep sliced vegetables in the fridge.** Studies show we eat 29% more vegetables when they are in our sight line. Plus, they are easy to add to bagged lunches when they are pre-cut.
- **No time to slice and dice?** Use frozen vegetables in stir-fries, pasta, pizza and side dishes.

nutrition watch

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD



Lemony Lentil-Rice Salad with Hazelnuts

EASY | RECIPE

3 tbsp **hazelnut** halves
1 tbsp **olive oil**
1 medium **carrot**, diced
1 tbsp finely chopped **shallots**
1½ cups cooked **lentils**
(see cooking tip)
1½ cups cooked **brown rice**
3 tbsp fresh **lemon juice**
1 tbsp fresh **thyme**, chopped
(or ½ tsp dried)



- 1.** Toast hazelnuts in a hot, dry skillet about 2 minutes; watch closely to prevent burning. Remove and cool on a paper towel.
- 2.** In same skillet, heat oil over medium heat; sauté carrot and shallots 2-3 minutes. Gently combine skillet mixture in a large bowl with lentils and rice.
- 3.** Stir in lemon juice, thyme and nuts. Serve on a bed of greens with grape tomatoes.

Toppers: Try a small scoop of non-fat plain yogurt or crumbled goat cheese.

From Personal Best®

MAKES 4 SERVINGS.

231 calories | 9.2g protein | 6.8g total fat | 1.0g sat fat | 4.9g mono fat | 2.6g poly fat | 0.0mg cholesterol | 34.8g carbohydrate | 2.4g sugar | 7.9g fiber | 2mg sodium

Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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News & Notes

- **Open Enrollment's Coming!**
Make your 2014 benefit choices Monday, October 7 through Thursday, October 31. Watch your home mail for an open enrollment letter.
- **Health Reform, the City and You:**
While several federal health care reform initiatives – such as health insurance exchanges – are going into effect soon, little action is needed by City employees. Watch your U.S. Mail for an information packet on City medical plans and Health Care Reform.

City Wellness Programs

- **Tobacco Cessation:** You and your covered adult dependents are eligible for free coaching and medication, if appropriate. Enroll by calling 866-784-8454.
- **Employee Assistance Program:**
Counseling and life resources for you and your household. Call 888-272-7252. Visit horizoncarelink.com; city of seattle, city of seattle
- **Weight Watchers:** Special pricing for you and covered adult dependents. Enroll at wellness.weightwatchers.com.

top safety



Question of the Month: *How can I prepare for evacuation in an emergency?*

Answer: Plan ahead.

1. Know your emergency evacuation route.
2. Keep gas tanks filled because stations may be closed during emergencies.
3. If you don't own a vehicle, arrange transportation with someone in advance.
4. Arrange a meeting place for other family members outside of the evacuation area (if you're separated).
5. Buy a battery-operated radio and batteries so you can listen for alternative evacuation routes in case of blockages.
6. Create a disaster supply kit, including water, non-perishable foods, medications and other important items.

Note: If advised to evacuate, leave immediately and follow the recommended evacuation route.

expert advice

By Eric Endlich, PhD

Q: How do I find a good counselor?

A: Consider what type of professional you need and what specialties might be important.

Types of counselors – Licensed psychologists, social workers and mental health counselors can all be helpful. Psychiatrists (and some nurses) can prescribe medication if needed.

Where to find them – Ask your primary care provider for a recommendation. Check with your local hospital, university counseling center, place of worship, community mental health center, or state association of psychologists or social workers. Feel free to meet with more than one.

Qualifications – Call your health insurance toll-free number and ask for a list of nearby providers who accept your plan. Your counselor should be licensed and experienced, especially in the area you want help with. It's also important that you feel it's a good match.

Dr. Endlich is a practicing psychologist in Boston.

Weight-Loss Goals: For Real → Continued from page 1.

Include favorite foods. Severely limiting food choices does not help people lose weight. Just eat high-calorie favorites less often and in smaller portions, and fill up on fruits and vegetables.

Fill up with water. If you feel hungry you might just be thirsty, so try drinking water instead of eating.

Weigh weekly. People who weigh themselves once a week are more likely to meet their weight-loss goals and keep the weight off. Weight can vary by a few pounds every few days as water weight shifts.

Exercise. You won't find many people maintaining a healthy weight who aren't doing regular physical activity in addition to what they do ordinarily each day. Try to burn at least 100 extra calories a day.

Track your food and activity for a few weeks. It reveals eating behaviors that may sabotage your weight goals and those which help you succeed.

