

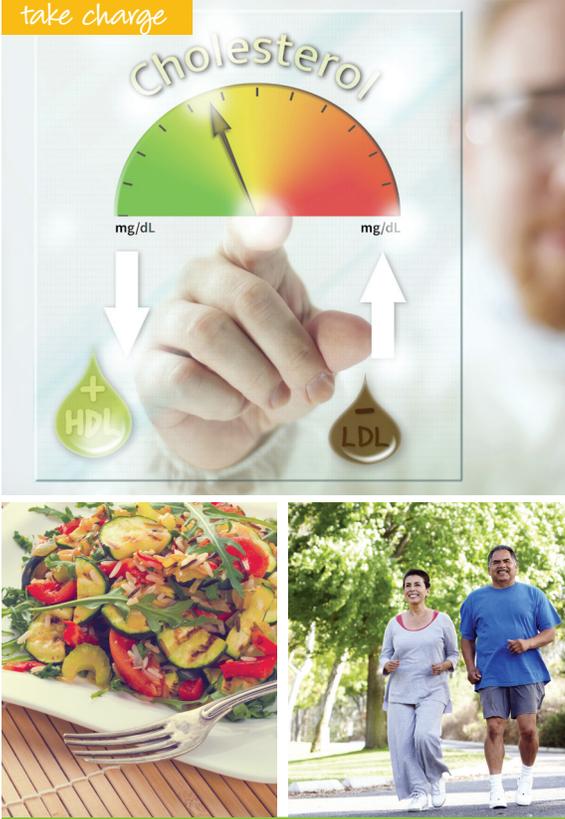
# TAKE CHARGE!



for health and living

September 2014

take charge



## 4 Ways to Raise Good Cholesterol

**Healthy high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol can help strengthen your heart.** The good news? You may be able to raise it with practical lifestyle habits.

**Exercise more.** Cardio exercise is best for boosting HDL. Aim for 5, 30-minute sessions of moderate-intensity activity per week, such as brisk walking. Or do 3, 25-minute segments of vigorous-intensity activity, such as aerobics. Any activity that raises your heart rate is beneficial.

**Lose excess weight.** Losing 5% to 10% of your current weight can raise HDL and improve your blood pressure and blood sugar levels.

➔ Continued on page 4.

## city events

### Forgiveness: Letting Go to Move Forward Webinar

Tuesday, September 16  
12 noon - 1:00 pm  
Login: See future flyer\*

### Roth Contribution (After Tax) Option - Deferred Compensation

Thursday, September 18  
12 noon - 12:45 pm  
SMT 4080

### Brain Health Webinar

Tuesday, September 23  
12 noon - 1:00 pm  
Login: See future flyer\*

### Free Blood Pressure Screening

Wednesday, September 24  
Stop by between 10:30 am and 1:30 pm  
SMT 4096

### Diversified Real Asset Fund 101 - Deferred Compensation

Wednesday, September 24  
12 noon - 12:45 pm  
SMT 4020  
Register at 206-447-1924

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

top fitness

## Fitness Breaks for At-Home Workers

**Working from your home offers you a distinct fitness advantage.** To start with, you can use the time saved by not commuting to the worksite for a regular exercise routine. Morning, noon or night, take your pick.

What's more, being in the comfort of your casual attire and the convenience of your home, why not fit in a few physical activity breaks during your workday?

Exercise offers so many benefits, especially for desk-bound workers. It increases your stamina, reduces stress and muscle tension, and improves concentration. And there are many creative ways to get up and get active.

**Leave your work area when you take a break.** Don't sit at your desk and check email or social media. Standing up and walking around increases blood circulation and improves your comfort level throughout the day.

**If possible, schedule a 3-minute time-out from sitting every 30 minutes.** Prolonged sitting stresses your spine. Give your eyes, neck, hips, wrists and shoulders a break - get up and move around.

**Walk outside for 10- to 30-minute breaks** to refresh your mood, boost energy and raise productivity.



*Why not fit in a few physical activity breaks during your workday?*

“Health and cheerfulness naturally beget each other.”  
- Joseph Addison

This Edition

- ➔ QUIKQUIZ™: Menopause
- ➔ Just for Guys: Prostate Health
- ➔ Medical Warning Signs
- ➔ Recipe: Lemony Lentils and Brown Rice



# Medical Warning Signs

Being able to recognize potentially serious symptoms – such as unexplained weight loss or lingering depression – can mitigate problems and even save your life. Learn to spot warning signs and get them checked by your health care provider without delay.



## Eight common medical warnings:

1. **High fever** – 103°F or higher requires urgent care. Persistent fever can signal a hidden infection.
2. **Bowel changes** – such as persistent diarrhea, constipation or bloody or black stools. Possible causes: bacterial infection, irritable bowel syndrome or colon cancer.
3. **Urination changes** – blood in the urine can be caused by kidney stones, bladder or prostate infection, or cancer of the kidney, ureter, bladder or prostate. Frequent urination may indicate a bladder infection, diabetes or prostate enlargement.
4. **Unintentional weight loss** – such as losing up to 10% of your weight in 3 to 6 months. Possible causes: overactive thyroid, diabetes, depression, liver disease or cancer.
5. **Emotional changes** – such as new or prolonged feelings of isolation, sadness, anger, fear and hopelessness, are signs of depression and anxiety that are often treatable.
6. **Persistent cough** – sometimes due to viruses or bronchitis. Other causes include allergies, acid reflux and sleep apnea.
7. **Shortness of breath** – besides physical exertion, may be caused by problems including asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart problems and panic attacks. Gasping for air requires emergency care.
8. **Persistent joint pain** – swelling, achiness and increasing disability of your knees, lower back or hips may indicate arthritis. Seek help to control further damage.

# QUIKQUIZ™: Menopause

body matters

Menopause produces hormonal changes occurring in most women around age 50. *Test your knowledge.*

1. Menopause effects come on suddenly.  
True\_\_ False\_\_
2. Hot flashes are one of the most common effects of menopause.  
True\_\_ False\_\_
3. Exercise may reduce hot flashes.  
True\_\_ False\_\_
4. Menopause causes weight gain in most women.  
True\_\_ False\_\_
5. All women should receive hormone therapy (HT).  
True\_\_ False\_\_



## ANSWERS

1. **False** – Your body gradually adjusts to fluctuations in estrogen and progesterone hormones, producing menstrual changes and symptoms lasting as long as a few years.
2. **True** – Other complaints include vaginal dryness, sleep trouble, urinary problems and mood changes.
3. **True** – Women who exercise regularly report better control of hot flashes and insomnia. Weight loss may also help reduce or eliminate night sweats and hot flashes.
4. **False** – Although weight gain after menopause is common, lifestyle choices are mostly responsible for the weight gain, not hormonal changes.
5. **False** – Hormone therapy is no longer routinely recommended. However, short-term it can be useful and safe for women who have menopause symptoms or who have high risk of osteoporosis. If you choose HT, follow your provider's instructions on dosage and length of use.

## Just for Guys: Prostate Health



**More than 230,000 new cases of prostate cancer are diagnosed each year in the U.S.** Scientists have yet to learn how to prevent prostate cancer – other than to protect your health in general:

- ✓ **Eat a wide variety of fruits and vegetables each day.** Get at least 2½ cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruit per day. **Tip:** Eating cruciferous vegetables, such as cabbage, broccoli and radishes, has been shown in studies to reduce prostate cancer risk.
- ✓ **Adopt a low-fat diet.** Select leaner cuts and small servings of meat (1 serving equals 3 ounces, about the size of a card deck), avoid fatty snacks and choose low-fat dairy foods.
- ✓ **Limit alcohol.** Long-term, heavy drinking has been linked to increased risk.
- ✓ **Lose excess weight.** Being obese increases your risk.
- ✓ **Exercise aerobically most days of the week.** Check with your health care provider first if you have high blood pressure or other health complications.

September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month.



The American Cancer Society advises normal-risk men to consult their health care provider about prostate cancer screening by age 50. If you are African American or you have a first-degree relative with prostate cancer, see your provider at age 45. The ACS recommends age 40 for men at highest risk – those who have more than 1 first-degree relative who had prostate cancer at an early age.

Discuss the uncertainties, risks and potential benefits of screening with your provider before you decide to get screened for prostate cancer. And ask about other steps you can take to reduce your risk in addition to the ones listed above.

best bites

### Produce Pick of the Month: Lemon

Lemon is probably the most popular flavoring ingredient in cooking after salt and pepper.

Its fresh, tangy taste actually enhances the flavor of many foods – vegetables, sauces, soups, pilafs, baking and, of course, seafood.

To get the maximum juice from your lemon: Before slicing, roll the lemon on a counter and apply light pressure with your hand. The best way to store lemons is in the refrigerator, in a crisper drawer or plastic bag.



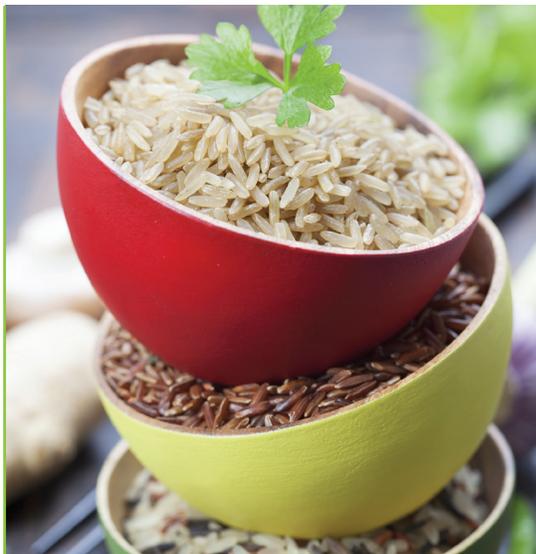
## 5 Secrets to Staying Motivated

If you lack motivation, you might feel bored, unfocused or tired. Half the day might float by before you realize you haven't accomplished much – followed by guilt or even panic as you fall behind, but can't figure out how to catch up.

Break the chain by keeping motivation high. Try these 5 steps:

- 1. Break down jobs.** Dividing big tasks into small chunks can boost your sense of accomplishment.
- 2. See the big picture.** Think about how the work you are doing impacts coworkers and clients. Making a difference is a great motivator.
- 3. Set goals.** Make them achievable and realistic.
- 4. Mix it up.** If possible, vary your tasks, or try a new approach to work you do all the time.
- 5. Reward yourself.** When you finish a task, treat yourself – use social media, put money in a special account or go out with friends.

>> Sometimes the best reward is the satisfaction you get from a job completed – what can you check off your list today?



eating smart

## Carbohydrates: Highs and Lows

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

From low-carb diets to gluten-free living, carbohydrates are a much-maligned nutrient. That's too bad, since carbs are the brain's main source of energy. The Institute of Medicine recommends a minimum intake of 130 grams a day, so it's vital to learn which carbs are the healthiest.

### Choose more:

The best carbs come from high-fiber, unprocessed foods such as legumes, vegetables, fruit and whole grains. Unprocessed whole grains such as brown rice, quinoa (keen-wa) and oats have more fiber and nutrients than refined white rice and white flour.

Fiber-rich carbs are vital because fiber helps sustain normal cholesterol levels. Plus, fiber slows the rate at which the small intestine absorbs carbohydrates. This prevents major highs and lows in your blood sugar levels, and helps reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes.



### Choose less:

Yes, foods made from refined sugars and grains taste good, but they contain carbs that are less filling than their fiber-rich cousins. The body absorbs refined carbs relatively quickly, increasing blood sugar and triggering a release of insulin. An hour or 2 after eating, hunger returns and you crave more carbs. It's a vicious cycle.

**Good to know:** Overeating refined carbs can lead to weight gain – a precursor to heart disease, diabetes and some types of cancer. So, swap your apple juice for a whole apple, skip the soft drinks and opt for whole grains most often.

### Lemony Lentils and Brown Rice



### EASY | RECIPE

From Personal Best®

- 9 oz. frozen artichoke hearts, quartered
- 1 cup dried brown lentils
- ½ cup long-grain brown rice
- 3 tbsp hazelnut halves
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ cup diced onion
- 3 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. Thaw artichoke hearts.
2. Cook lentils and rice separately and according to package directions; drain lentils and fluff rice. Set aside. Meanwhile:
3. Toast hazelnuts in hot, dry skillet 2-3 minutes, stirring; remove from skillet.
4. Heat oil in the skillet over medium heat; sauté onion and artichoke hearts 2-3 minutes.
5. Stir in lentils, rice and lemon juice; lower heat, cover and simmer for 10 minutes.
6. Before serving, stir in hazelnuts.

Makes 6, 1-cup servings. Per serving:

292 calories | 12g protein | 8g fat | .9g sat fat | 5.5g mono fat | 1.1g poly fat | 44g carbs | 2.2g sugar | 11.7g fiber | 40mg 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; Cynthia Gale, MS, RD; 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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## News & Notes

■ **Dependent Eligibility Verification:** The City wants all dependents eligible for City benefits to stay covered. *If you didn't submit your documents to Aon Hewitt by the August 29th extension date, you will receive a benefits termination letter along with steps to appeal the decision. If you submitted your documents, thank you!*



■ **Open Enrollment is Soon!** Make 2015 benefit choices Monday, October 6 through Friday, October 31. Watch your home mail for an open enrollment letter.

■ **Health Care Flexible Spending Account:** Plan now for Open Enrollment. Start estimating your 2015 out-of-pocket costs by reviewing your 2014 out-of-pocket expenses. Include doctor's office copays, prescription drug and other coinsurance, and any out-of-pocket dental and vision expenses.

**A Change for 2015:** the minimum annual contribution for both Dependent Day Care and Health Care spending accounts will be reduced from \$300 to \$120, making it easier for employees to try out FSA and experience the tax savings.

### top safety

## Q&A: Fall Harvest Safeguards

There's no doubt that vegetables and fruit are good for you, but how do you store and prepare them safely? Here are some answers to common questions:

**Q: Is there any harm in eating overripe vegetables or fruit?**

**A:** If it's ripe, but not bruised, it's OK to eat – to a point. If you see mold on the surface, toss it. Also, bacteria can build up quickly on damaged or bruised vegetables and fruits. Remove the bruised section before eating.

**Q: Do you have to wash fruits and vegetables?**

**A:** Yes, wash them even if you plan on peeling them. Wash your hands before and after handling produce. **Exception:** You don't need to clean bagged produce (mixed greens or fresh spinach) labeled **prewashed** or **triple washed**.

**Q: What should I wash them with?**

**A:** Plain water is fine. Use a clean produce brush to scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers.

**Q: How can I avoid cross-contamination?**

**A:** Separate fruits and vegetables that will be eaten raw from other foods such as raw meat, poultry or seafood to avoid cross-contamination. Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils and countertops with soap and hot water after preparing raw meat, poultry and seafood.

**Q: How do I store fruits and vegetables?**

**A:** Store perishable fruits and vegetables at temperatures of 40°F or below. **Note:** Refrigerate all produce that is purchased pre-cut or peeled.



### expert advice

By Eric Endlich, PhD

**Q: What is an EAP?**

**A:** Many employers choose to offer an employee assistance program (EAP) as a paid benefit.

Typically, the EAP benefit is automatically provided to all employees (and their dependents in many cases) at no extra charge, with no need to sign up. EAPs offer a wide variety of services that may include:

- Free, short-term counseling for personal concerns such as anxiety, addictions or family problems.
- Referral to community resources for additional counseling, child care, eldercare and other needs.
- Consultation with managers for challenging situations.
- On-site workshops on stress management or other topics.
- Group debriefings for workplace crisis situations.

EAP services are free and confidential. The City's provider is Horizon Health. To access services, call 1-888-272-7252 or TTY 1-888-879-8274. Find online resources at [www.horizoncarelink.com](http://www.horizoncarelink.com).

**Login:** city of seattle; **password:** city of seattle.

## 4 Ways to Raise Good Cholesterol — Continued from page 1.

**HDL** If you smoke, quit. This will raise your HDL levels and help your heart significantly. Your health care provider can help you decide if cessation aids are best for you.

**HDL** Avoid trans fats. These artificial fats lower HDL and are in processed foods and fried fast foods. Unsaturated fats in vegetable oils as well as foods containing omega-3 fatty acids (such as salmon) are heart friendly.

If you don't know your HDL level, ask your provider for a baseline cholesterol test.

HDL Levels	POOR	BETTER	BEST
Men	Below 40mg/dL	40-49mg/dL	60mg/dL and above
Women	Below 50mg/dL	50-59mg/dL	60mg/dL and above

September is Cholesterol Education Month.

