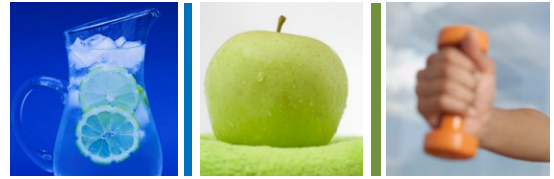


TAKE CHARGE!



March 2024

Friendships Foster Good Health

Adult friendships create meaningful social connections.

More than ever since COVID-19, we've seen firsthand the impacts of loneliness and social isolation on people. Staying connected through adult friendships can help us overcome any negative impact of aging.

In fact, research has shown that having close friends may help add years to your life. One study suggested that those with a larger social network had lower mortality at a ten-year follow-up than those with a smaller social network.

Specifically, adults with strong social connections were shown to have a reduced risk of significant health problems, including depression, high blood pressure and an unhealthy body mass index. And of course, companionship can also improve your self-confidence and reduce stress.

However, the 2021 American Perspectives Survey found that Americans report having fewer close friendships than they once did. The good news is that it's more about **quality** than *quantity*.

Maintaining friendships as a busy adult can be challenging at times. To connect well with other people, it helps to be yourself and be available to friends by making your relationships a priority. To nurture friendship, make time for those you care about. Be present by connecting regularly. Show up for your friends, especially when it could matter the most to them.

Be the friend you want to have, and lead with kindness and compassion. You can show your trust as a friend by sharing and asking for help when the time comes.



city events

Deferred Compensation Webinars

How Deferred Compensation Impacts Taxes

Tuesday, March 5

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm

Register [here](#)

Deferred Compensation Distribution and Taxes

Thursday, March 14

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm

Register [here](#)

How Deferred Compensation Impacts Taxes

Monday, March 19

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Register [here](#)

Deferred Compensation Distribution and Taxes

Thursday, March 28

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm

Register [here](#)

Proactive Health: Dealing With Sleep Issues

Wednesday, March 6

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Register [here](#)

All Work and No Play - Avoiding Burnout

Tuesday, March 12

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

Register [here](#)

Proactive Health: Gut-Brain Connections

Thursday, March 14

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Register [here](#)

Proactive Health: Eating for High Energy

Tuesday, March 19

11:30 am – 12:30 pm

Register [here](#)

Creating Good Health Humor

Thursday, March 21

11:30 am – 12:30 pm

Register [here](#)

Proactive Health: Women's Health

Tuesday, March 26

10:00 am – 11:00 am

Register [here](#)

The Smart Moves Toolkit, including this issue's printable download, [Eating Plan for Life](#), is at personalbest.com/extras/24V3tools.

How's Your Sleep?



The quality of your sleep affects your mood, health and work. Sleep Awareness Week, from March 10 to 16, was started 26 years ago by the National Sleep Foundation (NSF) to encourage people to think about the importance of their snooze time and to take action if they aren't getting adequate, restful sleep.

Studies have mounted over the decades showing sleeping enough — and sleeping soundly — is linked to better physical and mental health, including a stronger immune system and less depression, according to the NSF. And not getting enough shut-eye raises the risk of accidents and lowers productivity, too.

Not getting enough sleep creates sleep debt. Eventually, your body will demand that the debt be repaid. If you are burning the candle at both ends, there's a good chance you're deep in debt.

If you wake up not feeling rested, the NSF offers these strategies to help improve your sleep:

- ➔ **Don't** skimp on shut-eye. Adults need seven to nine hours of sleep each night. It's important to keep to a regular sleep schedule, including the weekends.
- ➔ **Exercise** regularly. You don't want to do a vigorous activity right before bedtime, but regular low-impact fitness activities, such as walking or swimming, are helpful for improving sleep quality.
- ➔ **Say** no to large, heavy meals late at night. A light dinner about two to three hours before bedtime is best for digestion and sleep.

- ➔ **Unwind** before sleep by taking a relaxing bath, reading, or listening to soothing music.
- ➔ **Make** sure your bedroom is sleep-friendly. Turn off your phone and any other devices an hour before bed. Keep your bedroom dark (invest in light blocking curtains or shades, if needed).
- ➔ **If** you wake up still tired, it's important to find out why, and take action. You may have an undiagnosed but treatable health problem, such as sleep apnea. Schedule a checkup with your health care provider.

Are you getting enough sleep?

Check the statements below that apply:

- I have trouble falling asleep.
- I have too much on my mind to fall asleep or go back to sleep.
- I need more than 30 minutes to fall asleep.
- I can't go back to sleep when I wake up during normal bedtime.
- I wake up too early.
- I feel tired upon waking, despite apparent normal sleep.
- I awaken frequently during sleep time.
- I have uncontrolled episodes of falling asleep during the day.

How much sleep do you need?

It depends on your age and circumstances. The NSF recommends the following:

Adults age 18 and older	7 to 9 hours
Teens	8 to 10 hours
Children 6 to 12 years old	9 to 12 hours
Preschoolers	10 to 13 hours, including naps
3 to 5 years old	11 to 14 hours, including naps
Toddlers 1 to 3 years	12 to 16 hours, including naps
Infants 1 to 12 months	12 to 16 hours, including naps

You may need more or less sleep, depending on your health and lifestyle. For example, if you have the flu or COVID, getting extra sleep is essential for your recovery.

How did you do?

If you experience two or more of these situations regularly, you may have developed a problematic sleep pattern — one that may be interfering with your health and safety.



Benefits of Weighted Gloves

Weighted gloves build strength and stamina and tone arms. Lifting dumbbells and working out with resistance machines aren't new, but using weighted gloves can be a more convenient and less complicated way to add weight training to your fitness quest.

Previously, mainly boxers have used heavy, weighted gloves when they work out with punching bags. Now anyone can choose from a wide variety of gloves with small weights at sporting goods stores and online.

Weighted gloves for exercise typically have pocket-type holders on the backs which hold the weights (usually ½ to 1 pound for beginners and up to 4 pounds for the more fit). Some come with several different weights so you can add or subtract the amount from the gloves. It's important to make sure the gloves have secure but comfortable straps, too.

So, if you're not a boxer, what can you do with weighted gloves? Boosting your walking routine while carrying the extra weight is one of the easiest activities. You'll burn more calories. The gloves also add extra resistance to strengthen your upper body. Walking regularly with weighted gloves can strengthen bone density, reducing the risk of osteoporosis, too. You can also increase cardiovascular fitness and build stamina.

If gloves aren't for you, try wearing weights on your ankles and wrists. While all can help fitness if used safely, talk to your health care provider before you use any wearable weights if you have back, joint, or balance problems or other chronic conditions.

Don't fall for FOMO. Fear of missing out is a form of social anxiety. It's the perception (often inaccurate) fueled by social media that others are having more fun, are more popular, or are more successful than you. We're not all prone to FOMO, according to Washington State University (WSU) researchers studying FOMO. However, loneliness or low self-esteem can fuel it. To reduce or avoid FOMO, the WSU team advises self-compassion. Focus on the present, real moment. Use social media less or cut it off altogether for a while and lessen loneliness by engaging more with coworkers and real-life friends.



TIP of the MONTH

Hyper-Palatable Foods

Many popular ultra-processed snacks were created by food companies once owned by tobacco conglomerates, which are well-known for creating addictive cigarettes. These companies added the perfect amount of salt, sugar or fat (the bliss point) to make foods hyper-palatable, so people would crave and eat more of them. A new study found that food products owned by tobacco companies between 1988 and 2001 were 80% more likely to contain hyper-palatable combinations of carbs and sodium compared to other foods. Think before you eat; keep in mind what's in the manufactured foods you consume. Have a single portion of your favorite snack and save the rest for another occasion, rather than overeating.

Dietitian's Grocery List

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

eating smart



March is
Nutrition Month.

It's easier to prepare nutritious meals and snacks when you plan them in advance.

An important first step in planning is grocery shopping for the right ingredients and properly stocking your fridge, freezer and pantry.

Some people create a meal plan and know what they will cook each night. Others prefer to rely on a well-stocked kitchen so they can prepare meals in a pinch. If you prefer the latter, this grocery list should keep you supplied for delicious last-minute meals.

Pantry:

- Canned beans and lentils
- Canned fish
- Brown rice
- Assorted noodles: pasta, rice noodles, etc.
- Whole grains, such as quinoa and oats
- Nuts and seeds
- Peanut butter
- Canned tomatoes and tomato sauce
- Whole-grain crackers

Fridge:

- Milk or non-dairy alternative
- Eggs
- Greek yogurt

Cheese

- Cheese
- Salad greens: spinach, romaine, kale, etc.
- Vegetables: broccoli, carrots, sweet peppers, etc.
- Fruits: apples, berries, melons, etc.
- Condiments: mayonnaise, mustard, soy sauce, etc.

Freezer:

- Frozen vegetables, such as peas, broccoli and stir-fry mix
- Frozen fruit, such as peaches, mango and berries
- Chicken
- Fish and seafood, such as salmon and shrimp

Countertop:

- Bread, pita and tortillas
- Fruits and vegetables kept at room temperature: tomatoes, avocado, bananas, etc.

Dark cupboard:

- Onions
- Potatoes and sweet potatoes
- Garlic

Staples to have on hand:

- Extra-virgin olive oil or other cooking oils
- Vinegar (cider, rice, balsamic)
- Salt and pepper
- Favorite dried herbs and spices

You can mix and match the foods from this shopping list to make delicious meal combinations, such as:

- **Shrimp stir-fry:** Frozen stir-fry vegetables, shrimp, noodles.
- **Chicken dinner:** Chicken, broccoli, leafy greens, quinoa.
- **Pasta bake:** Pasta, tomato sauce, canned chickpeas, cheese.
- **Vegetable fried rice:** Eggs, brown rice, frozen peas, carrots.
- **PB and banana roll-ups:** Peanut butter, banana, tortilla or pita.



Egg and Vegetable Fried Rice

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, <i>divided</i> | 2 cloves garlic, minced |
| 6 eggs, whisked | 4 cups cooked and cooled brown rice |
| 2 medium carrots, peeled and diced | 3 green onions, thinly sliced |
| 1 onion, diced | 3 tbsp sodium-reduced soy sauce |
| 1 cup frozen shelled edamame | 1 tsp toasted sesame oil |
| 1 cup frozen peas | |



EASY recipe

Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in large pan over medium heat. **Add** egg, scramble until cooked and remove to a plate. **Add** remaining olive oil, then add carrots, onion, edamame, peas and garlic. **Sauté** 6-7 minutes until onion and carrots soften. **Add** cooked rice, green onions and soy sauce. **Stir** to combine and cook about 3 minutes to heat rice through. **Add** eggs and sesame oil. **Stir** to combine and serve warm.

Makes 4 servings. Per serving: 410 calories | 19g protein | 17g total fat | 4g saturated fat | 8g mono fat | 4g poly fat | 48g carbohydrate | 5g sugar (0g added sugar) | 6g fiber | 523mg sodium

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

Phone: 800-871-9525

Fax: 205-437-3084

Email: PBeditor@ebix.com

Website: personalbest.com

Executive Editor: Susan Cottman • Advisers: Patricia C. Buchsel, RN, MSN, FAAN; Jamie Lynn Byram, PhD, CFP, AFC, MBA; Eric Endlich, PhD; Kenneth Holtn, MS; Reed Humphrey, PhD; Gary B. Kushner, SPHR, CBP; Zorba Paster, MD; Cara Rosenbloom, RD; Elizabeth Smoots, MD; Margaret Spencer, MD • Editor: Aimie Miller • Designer: Sheila Nupen

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There's mixed news about colorectal cancer.



The good news is regular screenings and removal of precancerous polyps have lowered rates of colorectal cancer in older Americans. But unfortunately, more people age 45 and younger are being diagnosed with the disease. **Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month** in March is a reminder to contact your health care provider about screening options if you are age 45 or older. No matter your age, share your personal and family health history with your provider. You may need colorectal cancer screenings before age 45 or more frequently than normal if you have a family history of the disease.

News & Notes

- **File 2023 FSA Claims by March 31, 2024.** Did you have a Health Care or Daycare Flexible Spending Account (FSA) in 2023? Submit your claims and documentation now to naviabenefits.com or on the MyNavia app. Filing now will allow you time to address issues, such as substituting receipts for denied claims or re-submitting unreadable scans or faxes. Any remaining 2023 balances over the carryover limit (\$550) will be forfeited.
- **Looking for Child Care?** Kinside can help City of Seattle parents find daycare, preschools, camps, after school programs, and more. At no cost to you, Kinside will match parents with the care that aligns with their needs. Contact concierge@kinside.com or visit join.kinside.com/city-of-seattle to create an account.
- **Start Living Tobacco Free.** Did you know that the positive effects of quitting tobacco increase with minutes, days, weeks and month? Within 20 minutes your heart rate drops, within 12 hours carbon monoxide in your blood decreases to normal, and within 48 hours nerve endings start to regrow and smell and taste is enhanced. Within 14-90 days quit your heart attack risk drops and lung function begins to improve, and in 1-9 months you may cough less and breathe more easily. The Quit for Life Program is available at no cost to regular employees and covered adult family members. Enroll at www.quitnow.net or by calling **1-866-QUIT-4-LIFE TTY 711**.

Daylight Saving Time and Your Health

Daylight saving time (DST) impacts your body's natural rhythms. And the result can be far more than feeling extra sleepy after setting your clock forward an hour on March 10. The reason? The shift in time disrupts the body's natural rhythms.

Proponents of DST assumed it would make better use of more daylight in spring and summer and more sunlight exposure would boost moods. But research shows DST is associated with psychological disturbances, weight gain, increases in heart attacks and strokes and even more car crashes.

Daylight saving time can affect your health because of how the time change impacts circadian rhythm: the body's natural 24-hour biological cycle, set by the timing and daily amount of bright light exposure. During DST, which lasts until early November, your body gets less light in the morning

and more light in the evening, which can disrupt your circadian rhythm

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine and other sleep experts advise eliminating DST, but they've been unsuccessful. However, these tips may help you fare better during daylight saving time:

- For one to two days leading up to the switch to DST, get outside in the morning. More natural morning light can help preserve your circadian rhythm.
- The night before DST begins, go to bed one hour earlier than normal to prepare. Avoid caffeine, alcohol and blue light exposure one to two hours before bedtime.
- Exercise in the morning can increase wakefulness. It helps reset your internal clock, too.

Extend Your Ladder Knowledge

Ladder safety is basic — place the ladder on stable, even ground; inspect the ladder before use; keep three points of contact when ascending and descending the ladder; never carry tools or other objects in your hands while using a ladder and wear shoes that grip.

However, there are extra guidelines for extension ladders:

Read specific manufacturer's instructions regarding extension ladders — there are different guidelines for special situations.

Ensure that you don't place an extension ladder upside down.

Don't exceed the load rating of your ladder. Remember to include the weight of tools, materials and equipment.

Set the ladder at the proper angle. For example, when leaning a ladder against a wall, the bottom of the ladder should be one-quarter of the ladder's working, extended length away from the wall.

Use extra care when getting off and on the ladder. Avoid tipping the ladder sideways or causing the base to slide off.



Don't step or stand higher than the step label that marks the highest standing level.

Always extend the ladder three feet above the landing when accessing an elevated work surface.

Never use an extension ladder horizontally like a platform.