

TAKE CHARGE!



June 2025

Take a Real Vacation

Ah, vacation — a time to get away from it all, unwind, reconnect and enjoy each other's company or get away for some solo time. Yet, devices often disrupt these moments, with texting, gaming and documenting every experience taking center stage. And with social media flooded with everyone else's adventures, it's easy to feel left out. This begs the question: Are device use and detailing every experience robbing us of the true essence of a vacation — disconnecting and enjoying each other's company?

Don't let devices take away from spending quality time with your loved ones. Instead, turn them off and only use them for directions, calls and picture taking (no posting). Here are some ideas for device-free vacations and things to enjoy while on them:

Choose an off-grid destination or a resort with limited cell service or no Wi-Fi. Ask a travel agent to suggest a few ideas. Many resorts and hotels are following this format. Some even lock up your devices to encourage more family or me time.

Explore outdoor activities. Organize a nature scavenger hunt, take family hikes, visit national parks, play sports, bicycle and enjoy outdoor concerts.

Enjoy a guided city tour together.

Prepare meals together by taking a regional cooking course.

Enjoy water sports such as swimming, snorkeling, surfing or boating.

Grab a few beach chairs or blankets and read books together or just watch the sunrise or sunset.



Sign up for a new family experience, such as lessons in scuba diving, water skiing, snow skiing or ice skating.

Experience a wellness retreat. Some places even have digital detox programs.

Spend time on a dude ranch and experience a cowboy lifestyle.

Enjoy camping or glamping at a new destination.

Travel back in time and experience life at a historic location.

The Smart Moves Toolkit, including this issue's printable download, [Mobility and Exercise](https://personalbest.com/extras/25V6tools), is at personalbest.com/extras/25V6tools.

city events

Deferred Compensation

Introduction to Deferred Compensation

Tuesday, June 3

12:00 pm – 12:45 pm

[Register here](#)

Investment Options in the Deferred Compensation Plan

Wednesday, June 11

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm

[Register here](#)

Loans from the Deferred Compensation Plan

Thursday, June 19

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm

[Register here](#)

School's Out: Getting Ready for the Summer

Thursday, June 5

11:30 am – 12:30 pm

[Register here](#)

Thriving at Work in a Tough Political Climate

Tuesday, June 10

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

[Register here](#)

Paying off Debt While Building Wealth

Wednesday, June 18

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

[Register here](#)

Benefits 101 - Self-Advocating for Your Healthcare

Thursday, June 19

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

[Register here](#)

How the City GTL and AD&D Plans Work (2 of 2)

Friday, June 20

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

[Register here](#)

The Men's Health Playbook: Tips for a Healthier Life

Monday, June 23

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

[Register here](#)

Using Your Vision Coverage: Out-of-Pocket Costs and Discounts

Tuesday, June 24

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

[Register here](#)

Benefits 101: Traveling and Health Benefits

Thursday, June 26

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

[Register here](#)

Exercising with Allergies and Asthma

Summer days are great for exercising outdoors unless you have allergies and/or asthma. That's because tree and grass pollens, which can trigger asthma and allergic reactions, are heavy this time of year.



However, that doesn't mean you should forego exercise. The American Lung Association emphasizes that exercising regularly is important. It can improve lung capacity to the heart, which pumps oxygen throughout your body, helping muscles stay strong.

So, whether pollen triggers sneezing, congestion and coughs from allergies and/or asthma, talk to your health care provider about strategies for safe physical activity and whether you need to take or increase certain medications when pollen allergens are in the air.

Tip for safer exercising in pollen season:

- ➔ If the weather is dry and windy, the American Academy of Otolaryngic Allergy (AAOA) advises opting for a treadmill or other indoor exercise.
- ➔ After being outdoors, shower to remove pollen from your skin and hair, and wash your exercise clothing. Use a nasal saline spray or rinse after outdoor exercise to remove allergens from your nose.
- ➔ If you have asthma but must do outdoor chores and pollen is high, the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology recommends wearing a dust and pollen-filtering mask.
- ➔ Whether you have allergies or asthma (or both) don't increase your medication without talking to your care provider. Even over-the-counter allergy drugs can have serious side effects when taking more than the recommended dosage or combined with other treatments.

Unsafe Skin Care Fads

The internet is inundated with skin care trends and advice. While some tips are helpful and harmless, others can be risky and even dangerous. How can you tell what is safe or not? The best advice is to ask your health care provider or pharmacist before trying anything new.

In the meantime, here are some fads to avoid:

Plumping your lips with hot peppers: Using hot peppers such as habanero to temporarily make your lips fuller can have dangerous side effects, including allergic reactions and rashes.

Passing on the sunscreen: Some social media influencers claim sunscreen can cause cancer, but there is no scientific evidence to support this. In fact, skipping sunscreen increases skin cancer risk. Protect yourself by avoiding midday sun, using broad-spectrum sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) and wearing sun-protective clothing and a hat.

Taking supplements for skin and hair without consulting your health care provider: Since supplements aren't

regulated, it's important to discuss taking them to avoid medication reaction and unsafe ingredients.

Performing your own cosmetic treatments: There are many risks when inexperienced people do these types of procedures at home, such as infection, burns, rashes and permanent scarring. The best advice is to have these treatments performed by a qualified dermatologist or a state-licensed professional (esthetician).

Face taping: Putting tape on the face overnight to minimize wrinkles may seem harmless. However, tapes can cause irritation and breakouts. You may also tear off skin when you remove the tape.

Daily Chores May Do Your Heart Good

Even a few minutes of physical activity is good for you. That's the conclusion of an international study headed by University of Sydney researchers who followed the daily routines of more than 13,000 women and 9,000 men for almost eight years. The participants were sedentary. The surprising results found that these brief sessions can improve heart health — at least for women.

The researchers studied the health impact of vigorous intermittent lifestyle physical activity (VILPA)

— movement associated with an occupation, housework or transportation, such as walking

upstairs, carrying groceries, or walking through a parking lot. Just 3½ minutes of VILPA daily was

associated with a lower risk of serious cardiovascular events, such as heart attacks and heart failure in women, but not men. The researchers haven't found an explanation for the sex difference.



The Foodkeeper App can help you determine if food is stored properly and how long it can be stored to maximize quality and safety. Users can search by food or by food category (e.g., produce, dairy). The USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, Cornell University and the Food Marketing Institute developed the app. Learn more at foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/foodkeeper-app/.



TIP of the MONTH

FDA Updates 'Healthy'

Soon it will be easier for Americans to choose healthy foods while grocery shopping. The Food and Drug Administration has updated the definition of healthy for use on food labels. New criteria were created to discourage the use of the term **healthy** on ultra-processed foods. To qualify as healthy, foods must include specific amounts of nutritious ingredients, such as fruits, vegetables or dairy, and meet limits set for added sugars, sodium and saturated fats. Public health experts hope the change will guide consumers toward healthier choices and encourage manufacturers to improve product quality.

SUPPLEMENTS: Behind the Hype

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

eating smart

Dietary supplements, such as multivitamins and herbal remedies, generate \$30 billion annually in the U.S., and more than 90,000 products flood the marketplace. Despite the hype, you may need fewer supplements than you think. Here is a quick guide to choosing the right supplements for you.



Take only what you need. Supplements are meant to fill gaps in your diet or treat specific health conditions. First, work with your health care team to identify nutrient gaps. A blood test can tell if you are deficient in any vitamins or minerals and need to take a supplement.

Your health care provider can also recommend supplements that specifically work for medical conditions that you may have. For example, they may recommend you take iron for anemia or plant sterols for high cholesterol. There's potential harm — and no value — in taking supplements that you don't need.

Buy reputable brands. Unlike the drug industry, supplements are not regulated or tested for quality. The supplement industry is self-regulated, which means it's up to individual manufacturers to test their products. Luckily, some third-party companies offer supplement testing to provide peace of mind to consumers. Buy brands that have been tested by and bear the seal of any of these:

- ↔ United States Pharmacopeia (USP).
- ↔ National Sanitation Foundation (NSF).
- ↔ Natural Products Association (NPA).
- ↔ Isura Certified.

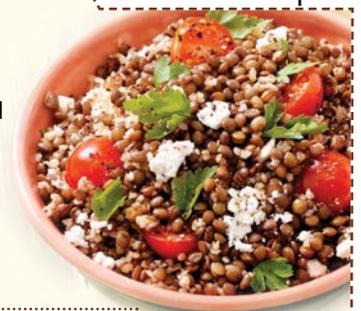
Buy from known suppliers. The knock-off supplement market is thriving, as are supplement theft and resale. Don't be duped. Buy supplements from well-known pharmacies or health food stores rather than online markets.

Skip the hype. Be wary of supplement companies that make lofty, unrealistic promises about their products and use words such as miracle, cure or magic. If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is.

Greek-Style Salad with Lentils

EASY recipe

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 can (15 oz.) brown lentils, rinsed | ¼ cup each freshly chopped parsley and mint |
| 1 cup grape tomatoes, halved | 1½ tbsp extra-virgin olive oil |
| 1 cup diced cucumber | 1½ tbsp fresh lemon juice |
| 1 yellow or orange pepper, seeded and diced | 1 tsp honey |
| ¼ cup Kalamata olives | ½ tsp Dijon mustard |
| ½ cup feta cheese, crumbled | 1 clove garlic, minced |
| | Salt and pepper to taste |



In a large bowl, combine lentils, tomatoes, cucumber, pepper, olives, feta, parsley and mint. **Mix** well. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, honey, Dijon and garlic. **Add** salt and pepper to taste. **Pour** dressing over salad and toss to coat. **Serve.**

Makes 4 servings. Per serving: 257 calories | 13g protein | 12g total fat | 4g saturated fat | 4g mono fat | 3g poly fat | 27g carbohydrate | 7g sugar (1g added sugars) | 10g fiber | 644mg sodium

Stay in Touch

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, Ph.D., CFP, AFC, RSSA; Eric Endlich, PhD; Kenneth Holtyn, 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 B Nupen

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EXPERT advice

— Eric Endlich, PhD

Q: Can heat affect mental health?

A: Record-breaking heat, all too common these days, can harm your well-being. Some potential impacts include:

Sleep: Hot weather can disrupt sleep, causing irritability, fatigue and difficulty concentrating. Poor sleep can also aggravate existing mental health conditions.

Mood: Extreme heat can worsen symptoms such as depression and anxiety. Staying indoors to avoid the heat can also lead to isolation and loneliness.

Aggression: Hot days have been linked with higher rates of assault and other violent crimes.

Cognition: Excessive heat can slow down mental processing, and may reduce school and work performance.

Try some of the following tips to manage the effects of extreme heat:

Keep cool. Seek air-conditioned spaces, take cool showers, swim for exercise and wear breathable, loose-fitting or moisture-wicking clothing.

Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration and heat-related illnesses.

Rest up. Maintain a consistent sleep routine and create a cool, comfortable sleep environment.

Manage stress. Practice relaxation techniques, engage in hobbies and keep up your social connections.

Note: Keep in mind that some medications increase your risk of heat illness, such as diuretics and some psychiatric medications.

PB4.U®

News & Notes

• **Stronger Health Literacy, Smarter Health Choices:** Want to feel more confident navigating your benefits and the healthcare system? Check out a new series of 7 short videos that break down insurance, health care, and how to make the most of your City benefits. You can find them on the [Well-being Sharepoint](#) page or on the public link on [MyBenefitsTV](#). Looking for more? Browse the recorded webinars on the City of Seattle Benefits [Vimeo channel](#) or sign up for an [upcoming live webinar](#).

• **June is Men's Health Month:** June is a nationally recognized time for awareness, prevention, and education about the health and well-being of men and boys. Men's Health Month is part of an ongoing effort to educate men, boys, and their families about receiving annual check-ups with a health care provider, eating nutritiously, and talking about their mental health. Learn more at <http://www.menshealthmonth.org/> or <https://www.youtube.com/user/MHNMedia>.

• **Your Smile Deserves Self-Care Too:** When we think about self-care, the dentist isn't usually the first person who comes to mind—but oral health is an essential part of overall wellness. Even if you're not experiencing pain or problems, regular dental checkups help keep your teeth and gums healthy for the long term. Scheduling an appointment is simple—just call your dental provider.

Need a dentist? If you're covered by Delta Dental of Washington, visit their Find a Dentist tool at www.deltadentalwa.com. Dental Health Services members can go to <http://www.dentalhealthservices.com>, click "Plan Members," and set up their online account to get started.

Know the Signs of Malware

Malware is harmful software that is maliciously installed on your device without your knowledge. Common types of malware include ransomware, viruses, Trojans, adware and spyware.

The first signs of malware on your device include:

- ➔ Your device becomes slow, unresponsive and crashes often.
- ➔ Your browser's home page is different and you are redirected to different websites.
- ➔ You discover unfamiliar browser toolbars or additional programs installed (that you didn't install).
- ➔ You encounter a surge in pop-ups.
- ➔ Your operating system suddenly starts giving you error messages.
- ➔ You can't access your operating system tools, such as Task Manager or Activity Monitor.
- ➔ Emails or social media messages are being sent from your accounts without your knowledge.

If you suspect malware, don't log into online accounts with usernames or passwords — especially those with sensitive data, such as financial information.

To remove malware:

- ➔ Update your security software (do this often or when recommended).
- ➔ Run a security scan to remove the malware.
- ➔ Change all passwords and enable two-factor authentication.
- ➔ Get tech support from a service you know and trust.



June is Internet Safety Month.

6.2025 : Live Well, Be Well