Head to the web for more health and wellness resources

Not everything you find online is medically sound information. Be sure the sources you use are credible.

Here are some safe sites to visit:

• Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics — eatright.org
• American Cancer Society — cancer.org
• American Council on Exercise — acefitness.org
• American Diabetes Association — diabetes.org
• American Heart Association — heart.org
• American Lung Association — lung.org
• American Academy of Pediatrics — healthychildren.org
• Arthritis Foundation — arthritis.org
• Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America — aafa.org
• Centers for Disease Control & Prevention — cdc.gov
• Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia — phila.org
• National Endowment for Financial Education — nefe.org
• familiesandwork.org
• healthfinder.gov
• Mental Health America — nhm.org
• National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research — niddk.nih.gov
• National Alliance on Mental Illness — nami.org
• National Headache Foundation — headaches.org
• National Health Information Hotline — nhic.gov
• Life is a journey — hhc.hopehealth.com
January

TIME — something irreplaceable

We all have the same 24 hours in a day. But unlike other valuables, we can’t store time away and save it for a rainy day. These ideas can help you make the most of your time:

• Plan your day in advance. Write down everything you need to do and keep a master list.
• Set priorities. It’s better to finish 3 very important projects in a day than to finish 20 low-priority tasks.
• Try to limit distractions so you can concentrate on your priorities. If possible, get to the office early so you can catch up on emails and phone calls.
• Get organized. You can get more done in less time by de-cluttering and organizing your desk, files and paperwork.
• Instead of trying to do everything yourself, learn to delegate tasks — at home as well as at work.
• Keep a running list of errands to do. Group them by location and try to do everything at once.
• Make a list of things you can do in 5 minutes or less, such as write a note to a friend, straighten a drawer or make a quick phone call. Do these things when you have a few minutes to spare.

“The only reason for time is so that everything doesn’t happen at once.”
— Albert Einstein

Smart Living Tip: Make a point to include stress-relievers in your life: meditation, exercise and a fun hobby you can get totally lost in.
**February**

**Have a heart:**

- **Try to make most of the fat** in your diet monounsaturated (e.g., olive and canola oils, nuts, avocados) and polyunsaturated (e.g., corn and sunflower oils, some fish).
- **Substitute fatty fish** (e.g., salmon, mackerel, albacore tuna) for some of the meat in your diet.
- **Add more fiber to your diet.** Fiber is in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes.
- **Snack on nuts.** Although high in fat, nuts contain mostly heart-healthy fat.
- **Eat 1 1/2 to 2 cups of fruits and 2 to 3 cups of vegetables every day.** They’re a gold mine of essential nutrients.
- **Take a multivitamin/mineral supplement** for insurance. Vitamins B6, B12 and folic acid are especially important for heart health because they keep levels of artery-damaging homocysteine in check.
- **Get at least 150 minutes of physical activity weekly.** Brisk walking is an excellent, low-impact workout.
- **Nurture relationships** with family and friends.
- **Forget about anger.** Ask yourself, will this matter a month or a year from now?

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**Smart Living Tip:** Some websites (often for free) provide access to online meal calendars to organize making meals for friends or a family in need.

"**Matters of the heart matter most in life.**"

— Unknown
Depression

Are you sad or anxious? Do you feel hopeless, worthless or helpless? Are you tired or irritable? Have you lost interest in hobbies and activities that you used to enjoy?

If you answered yes to most of these questions, and these feelings have lasted more than 2 weeks, you may be depressed. Depression affects millions of Americans, young and old.

What you can do:
Talk therapy with a mental health professional and an antidepressant medication are 2 options. But if your depression is mild to moderate, you might want to try some of these self-help measures first:

• Don’t blame yourself or feel guilty because you can’t snap out of it.
• Establish regular routines.
• Get some brisk exercise every day.
• Eat a healthy, balanced diet that has as little refined and sugary food as possible.
• Include relaxing activities in your day, such as yoga, deep breathing, massage and soothing music.
• Talk — to friends, relatives, or a mental health counselor. Join a support group or online forum.
• Write down your thoughts in a journal.
• Learn how to meditate.

“Smart Living Tip: Always (as in 24/7) keep a small pad of paper or smartphone notes app handy to jot down ideas you have that you might not be able to act on at the time but could follow up on later.

“We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.” — Bertha Calloway
SUN.       MON.       TUES.       WED.       THURS.       FRI.       SAT.

April

Where to find the pot of gold

If you still haven’t found a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow, try looking at a different rainbow. The health benefits you’ll get from eating a rainbow of fruits and vegetables every day are literally as good as gold.

Brightly colored produce is packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients that can protect against heart disease and some types of cancer, as well as help you maintain a strong immune system.

Each fruit and vegetable family has its own unique disease-fighting properties. Eat regularly from each color for the most protection.

Shades of health:

**YELLOW**
- Lemons
- Peppers
- Crookneck squash

**GREEN**
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Spinach, Kale, Swiss chard
- Kiwi fruit

**ORANGE**
- Carrots
- Cantaloupe
- Sweet potatoes
- Pumpkins

**RED**
- Pink grapefruit
- Pomegranates
- Tomatoes
- Strawberries
- Raspberries
- Red apples
- Watermelon

**BLUE to PURPLE**
- Blueberries
- Blackberries
- Grapes
- Red cabbage

Sources: The National Cancer Institute; The Produce for Better Health Foundation; The Better Health Cookbook by Elizabeth Pivonka and Barbara Berry

“IT’S BIZARRE THAT THE PRODUCE MANAGER IS MORE IMPORTANT TO MY CHILDREN’S HEALTH THAN THE PEDIATRICIAN.”
— Meryl Streep

Smart Living Tip: For birthdays and holidays, consider giving time and friendship rather than presents.

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Know a caregiver? How to say ‘Thanks!’

Every day, more than 43 million family caregivers in the U.S. look after the needs of others — whether it’s a child with special needs, a sibling with a handicap or chronic condition, or an aging parent or grandparent.

For all that they do, caregivers deserve to know they are appreciated. If you know any caregivers in your family or community, let them know you admire them.

- Provide a heartfelt note or card.
- Give them gift certificates to their favorite coffee shop.
- Bring them fresh baked goods.
- Offer to prepare Thanksgiving dinner, so they can just relax and enjoy the holiday.
- Watch their elderly loved one, child or sibling for an afternoon to give them some time off.
- Plan a day for them around what they enjoy. Go with them if it’s appropriate.
- Hug them.

“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.”
— Theodore Roosevelt

Smart Living Tip: Find ways to sneak in movement throughout your day. See if you can run more errands on bike or foot.
Getting enough sleep

According to the National Sleep Foundation, before the light bulb was invented we slept an average of 10 hours per night. Today, almost two-thirds of us get fewer than the recommended 7 to 9 hours of sleep. To improve your sleep:

Same time, every night:
Create a routine so your body won’t put up a sleepless fight. Your bedroom should be quiet, dark and cool. Remove TVs and don’t bring work to the sheets.

Try to eat light, and you’ll enjoy a restful night. Eating a heavy meal too close to bedtime can keep you awake. Also, avoid caffeine. Some of our favorite late-night snacks, such as chocolate or soft drinks, have caffeine in them. If you must eat before bed, try milk, cereal, graham crackers or turkey.

Trouble getting right to sleep?
Listen to relaxing music or read — it’ll help you doze off without a peep. If you’ve tried the above tips and still can’t get enough sleep, or feel tired during the day, consult your doctor. You may have a sleep disorder.

“Laugh and the world laughs with you, snore and you sleep alone.”
— Anthony Burgess
July

12 great reasons to get moving

*Getting at least 150 minutes total of brisk physical activity weekly can help you:*

1. **Strengthen** your heart and lungs.
2. **Increase** the level of HDL (good) blood cholesterol.
3. **Lower** your blood pressure.
4. **Delay** or prevent type 2 diabetes.
5. **Keep** your bones strong.
6. **Strengthen** and tone your muscles.
7. **Boost** energy and productivity.
8. **Sleep** better.
9. **Improve** your posture and looks.
10. **Reduce** stress.
11. **Fight** depression and anxiety.
12. **Improve** your sense of well-being.

“All things are difficult before they are easy.”

— Thomas Fuller

Smart Living Tip: Suffering from a headache? Dehydration can be a trigger. Try drinking some water.
Sunscreen

1. Who is most at risk for skin cancer?
   a. A blond person with skin that freckles easily.
   b. A construction worker.
   c. Golfers.
   d. Someone with a history of sunburns early in life.
   e. A person with a large number of moles.
   f. All of the above.

2. How much sunscreen is enough?
   a. A dab just on your face and hands.
   b. One ounce (fills the palm of your hand), on everywhere that’s exposed.
   c. Less on tanned skin.

3. How often should you apply sunscreen?
   a. Just once during the day.
   b. Never, if I’m just going to be in the car.
   c. Before going outdoors, after swimming, after every 2 hours in the sun and after activities that make you sweat.

4. Which sunscreen is the best?
   a. Contains a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30.
   b. Blocks both ultraviolet A and B radiation.
   c. Provides all-day protection.
   d. Contains zinc oxide or titanium dioxide — ingredients that sit on top of the skin and truly block the rays (especially for children).

Answers: 1. (f) — but everyone is at risk.
         2. (b) — apply 20 to 30 minutes before going into the sun.
         3. (c) — you get more exposure than you think, even in the car.
         4. (a) (b) and (d) — no sunscreen works all day. There is no safe sun, indoors in tanning beds or out. Check yourself for suspicious moles monthly and have your doctor examine you regularly.

“Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadow. It’s what sunflowers do.”
— Helen Keller

Smart Living Tip: Appreciate the little things in life. Before going to bed, list the positive experiences from your day — the work you accomplished, the food you ate, the activities you were able to do and the people with whom you spent time.

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— Helen Keller

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Do your part to prevent medical errors

- **Ask questions.** If you don’t understand something, ask for a simpler explanation.
- **Make sure all of your doctors know** about all of the medications you are taking, including over-the-counter medications, vitamins and herbs. Tell them about any allergies or reactions you have had to medications.
- **When you get a new prescription,** ask what it is for; what side effects are likely; how and when to take it; if it is safe to take with dietary supplements; and what foods, drinks or activities you should avoid while taking the medication.
- **Always call to get the results** for any test you may have.
- **When you need surgery,** try to select a hospital which has lots of experience performing the operation that you need.
- **Ask health care workers** who have direct contact with you to wash their hands before they touch you. If you are in the hospital, ask care providers to check 2 forms of identification, such as your wristband and the name on the chart.
- **Have an informed friend** or family member go with you to appointments and stay with you in the hospital. They can speak up for you if you can’t.

“No man really becomes a fool until he stops asking questions.”
— Charles Steinmetz

Smart Living Tip: Your shoes are too tight if you can’t stick your finger in between your heel and the back of your shoes.
October

Urgent care or emergency?

For minor illnesses at times when you can’t see your own doctor, an urgent care clinic or a call to a nurse hotline may be able to provide the care you need, as well as save you time and the high costs of an emergency room visit.

Research the urgent care options available on your health plan. These guidelines can help you decide if you or someone else needs emergency attention:

Emergency Room/Call 911

- Chest pain with shortness of breath and/or sweating
- Difficulty breathing
- Uncontrollable bleeding
- Trauma or head injury
- Severe injury, burns or electrical shock
- Sudden dizziness, difficulty seeing, slurred speech, confusion, numbness or paralysis
- Unconsciousness
- Poisoning
- Vaginal bleeding during pregnancy

Urgent Care

- Sore throats, coughs, congestion, fever less than 103°F and other flu or cold symptoms
- Mild or moderate asthma attacks
- Earaches and minor skin infections
- Insect bites or rashes
- Sprains, strains, deep bruises
- Diarrhea
- Pregnancy tests and physical exams

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Smart Living Tip: Use positive language. Eliminate words such as not from your vocabulary. Instead of “I’m not going to run today,” say, “I think I will try swimming today.”

“Fall 7 times, stand up 8.”
— Japanese Proverb
“Quitting smoking is the easiest thing you can do. I ought to know, because I’ve done it a thousand times.” — Unknown

November

Smoking

**MYTH:** I can’t get addicted by only smoking socially.

**FACT:** Lighting up even on occasion can lead to addiction.

Tobacco is one of the most addictive drugs around. For some people, the harmless act of social smoking while at parties can ignite a very hard-to-kick habit. Smoking light cigarettes won’t help either. They contain the same health risks as regular cigarettes.

Ask anyone who smokes and they’ll likely tell you they started when they were young, probably because their friends were doing it. Or they became addicted later in life because they thought 1 or 2 cigarettes every week wasn’t a big deal.

**Signs that you may be getting addicted:**
- Do you crave a cigarette when you wake up?
- Do you think about smoking when you’re not?

**What to do if you want to stop:**
- People who want to stop smoking are more successful if they pick a quit day and use the help of a support group such as a telephone quitline, or an online quitters forum.
- A good day to quit is the Great American Smokeout on Thursday, November 15. Consider nicotine replacement therapy, such as gum, to help with cravings and withdrawal.

Smart Living Tip: Nurture relationships with family and friends by finding ways to be active together.
### December

**Say NO to colds & flu**

- Get an annual flu shot.
- Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Reserve high-fat, high-sugar and high-salt foods for occasional treats.
- Take a multivitamin/mineral supplement with your doctor’s okay.
- Don’t smoke.
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation (no more than 1 drink a day for women, 2 a day for men).
- Try to get 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night.
- Get at least 150 minutes of brisk exercise weekly.
- Learn relaxation skills such as meditation. Feeling stressed can leave us vulnerable to all sorts of ills — from colds to cancer.
- Learn to worry less — and to laugh more.
- Nourish friendships and other social relationships.
- Schedule rewards and happy times in your life.

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**Virus. A Latin word used by doctors that means ‘Your guess is as good as mine.’**

— Unknown

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**Smart Living Tip:** Replace large plates and bowls with smaller ones so you dish up less without realizing it.
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- American Heart Association — heart.org
- American Lung Association — lung.org
- American Academy of Pediatrics — healthychildren.org
- Arthritis Foundation — arthrits.org
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention — cdc.gov
- Families and Work Institute — familiesandwork.org
- National Endowment for Financial Education — nefe.org
- HealthFinder — healthfinder.gov
- Mental Health America — nmha.org
- National Headache Foundation — headaches.org
- National Institute on Aging — nia.nih.gov
- National Sleep Foundation — sleepfoundation.org

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