FOURTH EDITION

A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR HEALTHCARE CONSUMERISM

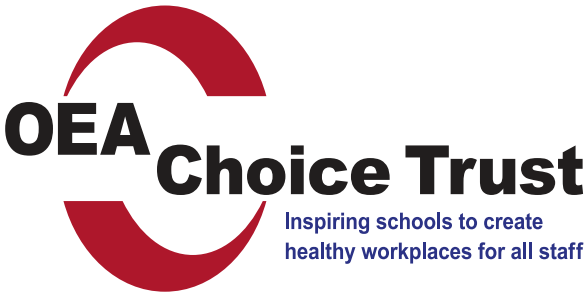
OEA Choice Trust

Inspiring schools to create healthy workplaces for all staff

This Publication is brought to you by OEA Choice Trust

A Resource Guide for Healthcare Consumerism

FOURTH EDITION



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GENERAL

This Health Care Consumerism Guide

This Health Care Consumerism Guide is a reference tool to help you become a more active health care consumer. It is intended to help raise your awareness so you can recognize and learn more about the health conditions affecting you, make the most of your health care benefits and pursue a healthy lifestyle.

Always check with your health care plan to verify the service you are requesting is a covered benefit.

The content of this guide is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice. Always seek the advice of a qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

This booklet is adapted from "An Introduction to Health Care Consumerism" and is used with the permission of The Sound Partnership, Tacoma, WA. CDC articles by permission.

Healthcare Consumerism is a movement which advocates patients' involvement in their own health care decisions. It is a movement from the "doctor says/patient does" model to a partnership model. Health consumerism tries to encourage health information empowerment and the transfer of knowledge so that patients can be informed and therefore more involved in the decision-making process. It also attempts to promote public understanding of basic organ function, the processes of chronic disease, and the beginnings of how to best prevent these diseases.

Managed Consumerism In Health Care—Robinson 24 (6): 1478—Health Affairs

Think - Healthy
Act - Healthy
Stay - Healthy

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What is Health Care Consumerism

It's about changing your behavior and becoming more involved in your health, taking more responsibility for making smart health care decisions and leading a healthy lifestyle.

It's a lifelong process that involves breaking old habits & developing new, healthier ones.

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Tips for Talking to Your Doctor

FamilyDoctor.org

Tips for Talking to Your Doctor

Taking an active role in your health care can help you get the best care possible from your doctor. One way to do this is to improve your relationship with your doctor. The following are some tips to help you and your doctor improve your health care together.

Talk to your doctor

Be sure to tell your doctor about any current and past health care issues or concerns. It's important to share any information you can, even if you're embarrassed. Give your doctor the following information during the exam:

- Any symptoms you are having.
- Your health history. You can create a "health journal" for yourself on paper or in a notebook, and bring it to your appointments. See "Creating a Health Journal" for more information.
- Personal information, including whether you are stressed or if your life is changing.
- Any medicines you are currently taking. Bring them with you or create a list of all your medicines. Include information about when and how often you take the medicine. You should also write down the strength of the medicine (for example, do you take 150 mg or 200 mg?).
- Any side effects you have from your medicine(s), especially if it makes you feel sick or if you think you may be allergic to it.
- Any vitamins or supplements you take.
- Any X-rays, tests results or medical records you have can be brought with you to the appointment.

Ask questions

Don't be afraid to speak up. It's important for you to let your doctor know if you don't understand something. If you don't ask questions, your doctor will think you understand everything he or she has told you. The following are some tips on asking your doctor questions during the exam:

- Ask every time you don't understand something.
- If you have questions before the appointment, just write them down and ask them during the exam. Be sure to write down the most important questions first to make sure they get answered.

- Tell your doctor when you need more time to talk about something. If the doctor isn't available to help, you should be able to talk to a physician assistant or a nurse. If no one else is available, see if you can schedule another appointment to continue your talk.

Take information home with you.

Taking written or recorded information home with you can help you remember information and instructions any time you need to. Your doctor is a good source of accurate information you can trust. The following are types of information you can take home with you:

- Notes that you have taken during the appointment. It's ok for you to write down the information your doctor gives you. Sometimes it helps to bring a friend or family member with you. They can help write down the answers to your questions.
- Written instructions from your doctor.
- A tape recording. Ask your doctor if it's okay to bring a tape recorder to the appointment.
- Brochures or other educational materials. If there aren't any available, ask where you can find some.

Follow up with your doctor

Make sure to follow any instructions your doctor gave you during the appointment, like taking medicine, scheduling a test or scheduling an appointment with a specialist. If you're confused or if you've forgotten some information, it's ok to contact your doctor. The following are some common reasons you may need to call your doctor:

- If you have any questions after the appointment. Ask to leave a message with the doctor or speak with a nurse.
- If you start to feel worse or have problems with your medicine.
- If you had tests and haven't got the results.

Other Organizations

- U.S. Surgeon General's My Family Health Portrait

Written by familydoctor.org editorial staff

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http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en.html

Breastfeeding

A FACT SHEET FROM THE OFFICE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

Breastfeeding

The experience of breastfeeding is special for so many reasons: the joyful closeness and bonding with your baby, the cost savings, and the health benefits for both mother and baby. Every woman's journey to motherhood is different, but one of the first decisions a new mom makes is how to feed her child. Here, you'll find facts about breastfeeding and get practical tips on how to make breastfeeding work for you while getting the support you need.

Q: Why should I breastfeed?

A: Breastfeeding is normal and healthy for infants and moms. Breastmilk has hormones and disease-fighting cells called antibodies that help protect infants from germs and illness. This protection is unique and changes to meet your baby's needs. Some reasons to breastfeed are:

- Breastfeeding offers essential nutrients and a nutritionally balanced meal
- Breastmilk is easy to digest.
- Breastmilk fights disease

Q: How long should I breastfeed?

A: The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding for at least 12 months, and for as long as both the mother and baby would like. Most infants should drink only breastmilk for the first six months.

Q: Does my baby need cereal or water?

A: Until your baby is 6 months old, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends feeding your baby breastmilk only. Giving your baby cereal may cause your baby to not want as much breastmilk. This will decrease your milk supply. You can slowly introduce other foods starting around 6 months of age.

Q: Does my baby need more vitamin D?

A: Most likely, yes. Vitamin D is needed to build strong bones. All infants and children should get at least 400 International Units (IU) of vitamin D each day. To meet this need, your child's doctor may recommend that you give your baby a vitamin D supplement of 400 IU each day.

Q: Is it okay for my baby to use a pacifier?

A: If you want to try it, it is best to wait until your baby is at least 3 or 4 weeks old to introduce a pacifier. This allows your baby time to learn how to latch well on the breast and get enough milk.

Once your baby is breastfeeding well, you should use the pacifier when putting your infant to bed to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Q: Is it safe to smoke, drink, or use drugs?

A: If you smoke, the best thing you can do for yourself and your baby is to quit as soon as possible. If you can't quit, it is still better to breastfeed because it may protect your baby from respiratory problems and SIDS. Be sure to smoke away from your baby, and change your clothes to keep your baby away from the chemicals smoking leaves behind. Ask a doctor or nurse for help quitting smoking!

www.womenshealth.gov | 800-994-9662

OFFICE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

You should avoid alcohol in large amounts. An occasional drink is fine, but the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends waiting two hours or more before nursing. You also can pump milk before you drink to feed your baby later.

It is not safe for you to use an illegal drug. Drugs such as cocaine, heroin, and PCP can harm your baby. Some reported side effects in babies include seizures, vomiting, poor feeding, and tremors.

Q: Can I take medicines if I am breastfeeding?

A: Most likely. Almost all medicines pass into your milk in small amounts. Some have no effect on the baby and can be used while breastfeeding. Always talk to your doctor or pharmacist about medicines you are using and ask before you start using new medicines. This includes prescription and over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and dietary or herbal supplements.

For some women, stopping a medicine can be more dangerous than the effects it will have on the breastfed baby.

Q: Do I still need birth control if I am breastfeeding?

A: Yes. Breastfeeding is not a sure way to prevent pregnancy, even though it can delay the return of normal ovulation and menstrual cycles. Talk to your doctor or nurse about birth control choices that are okay to use while breastfeeding.

Q: Does my breastfed baby need vaccines?

A: Yes. Vaccines are very important to your baby's health. Breastfeeding may also help your baby respond better to certain immunizations, giving him or her more protection. Follow the schedule your doctor gives you. If you miss any vaccines, check with the doctor about getting your baby back on track as soon as possible.

For more information…

For more information about breastfeeding, call the OWH Helpline at 800-994-9662 or contact the following organizations:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Phone Number: 800-232-4636 • *www.cdc.gov*

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

Phone Number: 847-434-4000 • *www.aap.org*

La Leche League International
Phone Number: 800-525-3243 • *www.llli.org*

Content last updated: July 25, 2014

www.facebook.com/HHSOWH

www.twitter.com/WomensHealth

YouTube www.youtube.com/WomensHealthgov

www.womenshealth.gov | 800-994-9662

OFFICE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

Make the Most of Your Resources

Know your benefits

Many school districts, educational service districts and community colleges in Oregon are members of the Oregon Educators Benefit Board (OEBB), a statewide program for school employee benefits. The following benefits are available to all OEBB participating districts and can make a big impact in your wellness efforts:

- Weight management programs (such as Weight Watchers)
- Health coaching sessions
- Tobacco cessation programs
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to help with stress
- Online tools and health assessments through individual health plan providers
- Free preventive health screenings (such as mammograms, pap smears and immunizations)
- Lower copays for office visits to treat chronic conditions (such as hypertension, asthma or diabetes)
- Free or reduced cost medications to treat chronic conditions

Oregon's School Employee Wellness Conference

Sometimes, a little inspiration is all you need to get started. You can get ideas for building or strengthening a wellness program — and hear success stories from other districts and schools — at the Oregon School Employee Wellness Conference. A wide range of school employees and community partners come together to learn more about the latest best practices and strategies for wellness in Oregon schools. This annual event was launched in 2012 as a way to promote overall employee health. It also connects individuals with each other to share ideas and build a movement toward healthy Oregon schools.

"When people get together, they're able to share stories, have a dialogue, and shape their future actions by what they have learned," said Suzanne Dalton, coordinator of professional development at COSA (Confederation of Oregon School Administrators). Dalton attended the 2012 conference and said that many of the attendees were able to find help and information to strengthen their own programs.

Conference attendees can also receive continuing education credits through Portland State University.

Visit us at
www.OEAChoice.com

Tips on Using Your Medicines Wisely

We are very lucky today to have modern medicines to help treat the many conditions and ailments that are experienced by older adults. Your prescription and non-prescription medications can treat disease, reduce symptoms, and help you live a healthier and more productive life.

But medicines are serious business. And taking medication is not always as easy as just swallowing a pill. It can involve many steps and decisions each day.

Using your medications the right way is very important to your health. The proper use of medicines not only helps you get the full benefit from the medications you take, but also reduces your chances of having side effects and problems that could occur from taking the medication the wrong way.

In order to make the best use of your medicines, it is important to take an active role in decisions about your treatment, to follow your treatment plan as prescribed by your doctor, and to watch out for problems and get help in solving them.

Here are some points to cover each time a new medication is prescribed;

- Ask about the risks and benefits of each medicine.
- Ask how often you or your doctor will have to check your medicine's effects. For example, checking your blood pressure if you are taking a medicine to lower it, or having a laboratory test done to make sure the levels of medicine in your blood are not too high or too low.
- Tell your doctor about all the medicines you are already taking. This includes prescription medicines and the medicines you buy without a prescription, such as aspirin, laxatives, vitamin supplements, and home remedies. Then your doctor can avoid giving you a new medicine that may not work well with one you already take. It is helpful and useful to keep a written list of all the medications you are currently taking— prescription and non-prescription— including the dose and instructions for use.
- Tell your doctor what is important to you about your medicines. You may want a medicine with fewest side effects, or fewest doses to take each day. If you have trouble swallowing, you may want a liquid form of medicine. You may care most about cost (there may be a generic drug or another lower-cost medicine you can take), or you may want the medicine your doctor believes will work best.
- Tell your doctor if you have any allergies to medications or if you have had any troubling side effects from medicines.
- Tell your doctor if you have any illnesses or problems for which another doctor or health professional is treating you.

Source: American Society of Consultant Pharmacists
www.ascp.com

Tips on Using Your Medicines Wisely (continued)

Watch for Problems and Get Help Solving Them

Talk to your doctor and pharmacist about any problems you may be having with your medications. Most medicine problems can be avoided or solved if you know what to watch out for and if you talk with your health professional about what is happening.

- Ask about the results of medical tests that show how the medicine is working. For example, if you are taking a medication for high blood pressure, it is important to monitor your blood pressure.
- Ask if the medicine is still needed.
- Tell how you are feeling since you started taking the medicine. Do you think it is helping?
- Tell about any problems you are having taking your medicine, including side effects or any new problems that may be related to the medicine. If you experience any effects that you associate with your medication, such as dizziness, drowsiness, confusion, rashes, or other unexplained symptoms, contact your physician or pharmacist immediately.
- Tell about any new medicines that another doctor gave you, and any new over-the-counter (non-prescription) medicines that you are taking. Telling which medicines you take is very important—especially if you are seeing more than one doctor.

How Your Pharmacist Can Help

When you pick up your medicines, always talk to the pharmacist and ask any questions you may have about your medications. Here are some points to cover:

- The name of the medicine and what it is supposed to do.
- How and when to take the medicine, how much to take, and for how long. Ask about any terms or directions you do not understand.
- Any special techniques or devices for administering the medication (e.g., liquids that you need to "shake well" before pouring the dose, or special instructions for the use of inhalers, suppositories, eye drops, or patches).
- What food, drinks, other medicines, or activities you should avoid while taking the medicine.
- What side effects the medicine may cause, and what to do if they occur.
- Whether you can get a refill, and if so, how often.
- What to do if you miss a dose.
- How should the medicine be stored? Do any of the medicines require refrigeration?
- Ask if there is written information you can take home. Most pharmacies have information sheets about your prescription medicines.

Try to use one pharmacy for all your medicine needs. Make sure the pharmacy keeps a complete "profile" of all your medications. Give a complete list of all medications to your pharmacist, including anything that you use that is available without a prescription. Make sure you include things such as vitamin supplements and home remedies, as these may interact with prescriptions you may also be taking. This will help your pharmacist keep track of your medicines, identify any duplicate therapy or potential interactions between the medications you take, and help you solve any problems you may have with your medicines.

Storing Your Medications

Store all of your medications in a designated location in your residence. Keep all medications stored together in one place unless they require refrigeration or are labeled "store in a cool place." This will help if an emergency situation occurs and your doctor needs to review all of your medications. Be sure that your medications are stored out of reach of any children that may visit, especially if you have non-child proof containers. Do not mix different medications together in one container; this will make it difficult if not impossible to identify your medications in an emergency.

Medicines should be stored in a cool, dry area. Do not store your medications in the medicine cabinet in the bathroom or in the kitchen because the heat and moisture may cause deterioration. Instead, store your medications in a designated area in your living room or bedroom.

Medications stored in the refrigerator should be separated from other items in the refrigerator. Consider keeping refrigerated medications in a plastic box or container in one area of the refrigerator.

Oral medications should be kept separate from other items that are for external use only (such as creams and ointment, or reagent tablets). Expired medications (there are expiration dates on all of your medications) and any medication that your doctor has discontinued should be discarded.

Never share or give your medications to another person.

Source: American Society of Consultant Pharmacists
www.ascp.com

Six Tips for Preventing Low Back Pain

STEP 1 **Stay active:** Try walking for 10 or 15 minutes a day—and aim to increase to at least 30 minutes!

STEP 2 **Increase your strength, balance and flexibility:** Do exercises that are designed to strengthen your back and maintain flexibility, such as yoga.

STEP 3 **Do your best to be at a healthy weight:** For people who are overweight, even losing a few pounds can help.

STEP 4 **Take breaks instead of sitting for long periods of time:** Stand up or change your position and try stretching for a few seconds. If you can, walk around for a couple of minutes.

STEP 5 **Give up smoking:** If you smoke or use tobacco, it's important to know that a smoker is twice as likely as a non-smoker to have low back pain.

STEP 6 **Reduce the chance that you might fall and hurt your back:** Clear away things on the floor and steps that could make you trip. Wear shoes or slippers with non-slip soles.

For more information contact Partner for Quality Care at ***www.partnerforqualitycare.org***

What three things can you do on your own that will help the most when you first get low back pain?

1. To feel better sooner, stay active! (It sounds surprising, but not being active can actually slow down your recovery)
2. Use hot packs or a heating pad to relieve the pain.
3. Consider taking a non-prescription generic pain reliever.

If it's been a month and your back is still hurting, what should you do?

- At this stage, what additional treatments work best for low back pain?
- Acupuncture
- Certain types of exercise therapy or yoga
- Cognitive-behavioral therapy
- Massage
- Progressive relaxation
- Spinal manipulation

Make the Most of Your Health Benefits

Knowing how your health benefits work is key to getting the most out of them. So take the time to get to know the ins and outs of the health related benefits offered by your employer.

Know What Services Are Covered

Never assume you have coverage for all services. Read the exclusions and limitations in your health plan materials to know what your plan won't pay for.

On the other hand, if you don't know all the services your plan does cover, you could end up delaying care you need unnecessarily. To think healthy, read up on the types of services your plan provides. Contact your health plan directly at the number on your identification card for detailed information.

Also be clear on where you can receive care. While some plans allow you to choose any provider for services (Preferred, Participating or non Participating Providers), Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) plans do not. If your plan does cover services provided outside of the network, it's important to be aware of any restrictions.

Healthy School Workplaces

Everyone Wins

Creating Healthy Workplaces for All Oregon Public School Employees

Workplace wellness programs support employees' health in the place where they spend the majority of their days—at work. In the demanding world of education, wellness is especially important. National research shows that school workplace wellness programs offer tremendous benefit and directly support educators' goals.

OEA Choice Trust helps all employees—including administrators, teachers, faculty and staff members—across Oregon create healthy worksites that support their physical, emotional and social health. We know that if school workplaces are dedicated to wellness, they create a culture of health and a healthier environment that benefits both school employees and the students they serve.

For a full list of evidence and sources, please visit ***www.OEAChoice.com/resources***

Healthy School Workplaces Benefit Staff, Students, Administrators and Community

- Healthy workplaces help all school employees manage stress, stay energized and find better balance in life. This lets them keep doing the work they love, and increases job satisfaction and morale.
- When school staff members are healthy, they are better able to focus and are more engaged and effective in their work. That's a win for employees and a boost for educational outcomes.
- Healthy workplaces support students' educational success. When school employees are healthy and work in a healthy environment, they take fewer sick days. That means more quality time in the classroom and robust relationships with students and families.
- Healthy school employees are influential role models for students, demonstrating healthy behavior and showing their commitment to wellness. And when students are physically, emotionally and mentally well, they can get the most out of their education.
- Because educators have strong ties to their communities, they are catalysts inspiring wellness and nurturing a culture of health that extends beyond the school.

Five Tips for Healthier School Workplaces

One: Make Healthy Food & Beverages Readily Available

Your work environment has a big influence on your food choices,[5] and staff break rooms are often stocked with unhealthy snacks that can be tempting during the mid-morning or afternoon slump. As an alternative, make fresh fruits, whole-grain snacks and water available in staff rooms, in vending machines, and at staff meetings and events.

Two: Take Your Staff Breaks

Ensure that staff members schedule and—most importantly—take their break time to be active, connect with other colleagues or simply rest. Incorporating a five- to 10-minute break into the work day helps lower stress and increases concentration and alertness.[3]

Three: Hold Walking Meetings

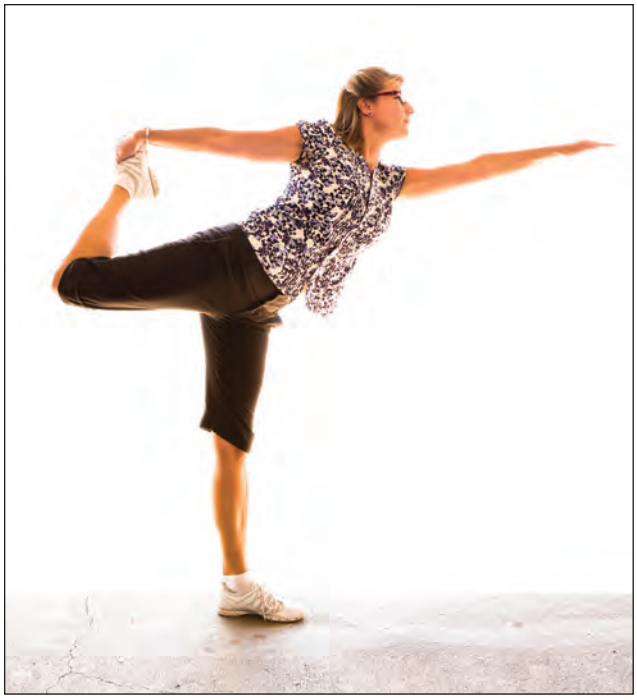
Instead of sitting around a table, turn your next administrative or planning meeting into a walking meeting. Exercise and fresh air promote better ideas, boost energy levels and support collaborative discussions and planning.[2]

Four: Create An Outlet For Stress

Stress affects employees' minds, bodies and relationships. Feeling overwhelmed? Close your eyes, and breathe slowly and deeply. Calm breathing relaxes the body and mind and prevents impulse reactions.[4] Other great stress busters: a brisk five-minute walk, stretches in the classroom with students or even just a minute of silence, or break your isolation by connecting with colleagues, friends and family.

Five: Provide & Drink Clean, Free Water

Dehydration can lead to muscle fatigue, loss of coordination and tiredness.[1] Promote healthy hydration by holding a water challenge. As an incentive, provide water bottles to employees. Don't have access to clean, free water? Raise funds for a portable water cooler and keep it at a central location, such as the staff room.



OEA Choice Trust is the only organization dedicated to workplace wellness for all Oregon public school employees. We offer expertise, experience across Oregon and grant funding to help schools create employee wellness programs that support their employees' specific goals. Together with teachers, school staff and administrators we are building a culture of wellness in Oregon schools.

[1] *"Healthy Hydration," www.acefitness.org, April 3, 2013, accessed Aug. 6, 2014, http://www.acefitness.org/acefit/fitness-fact-article/173/healthy-hydration/*

[2] *M. Oppezzo & D. L. Schwartz, "Give Your Ideas Some Legs: The Positive Effect of Walking on Creative Thinking," Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition, April 21, 2014, advance online publication, http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0036577*

[3] *"Five Minutes or Less for Health Weekly Tip: Take a Break," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Feb. 5, 2014, accessed Aug. 07, 2014, http://www.cdc.gov/Family/minutes/tips/takeabreak/index.htm*

[4] *Mathias, Rolando, "Relieve Stress With Just a Breath," www.greatist.com, June 23, 2011, accessed Aug. 6, 2014, http://greatist.com/health/relieve-stress-just-breath*

[5] *"Healthcare Can Lead the Way: Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice," http://publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/MN.healthcare.Healthcare%20Can%20Lead%20the%20Way.pdf, Public Health Law Center, Mar. 1, 2013, accessed Aug. 7, 2014.*

Please visit us at
www.OEAChoice.com

Healthy Vision: Take Care of Your Eyes!

BENEFITS

Care for your eyes to make them last for life

Taking care of your vision should be a priority, just like eating healthy and engaging in physical activity. Having healthy vision can help keep you safe when you are driving, while at work, home or school, participating in sports, or taking part in recreational activities. Fortunately, many eye problems and diseases can be treated if caught early.

To make sure you keep seeing clearly, get a comprehensive dilated eye exam as often as your eye care professional recommends. An eye care professional will examine your eyes for signs of vision problems or eye diseases. It's the best way to find out if you need glasses or contacts, or are in the early stages of an eye disease.

You should have a comprehensive dilated eye exam regularly to check for common eye problems. If you haven't had an exam for some time, schedule one this month. CDC's Vision Health Initiative and the National Eye Institute are encouraging Americans to take care of their eyes to make sure they can see well throughout their lives.

Visit an eye care professional if you have decreased vision, eye pain, drainage or redness of the eye, double vision, or diabetes, or if you see flashes of light, floaters (tiny specks that appear to float before your eyes), or circles (halos) around light sources.

There are nine ways you can help protect your vision:

1. Get a comprehensive dilated eye exam for yourself and your family members.
2. Know your family's eye health history. It's important to know if anyone has been diagnosed with an eye disease or condition, since many are hereditary.
3. Eat right to protect your sight—in particular, eat plenty of dark leafy greens such as spinach, kale, or collard greens, and fish that is high in omega-3 fatty acids such as salmon, albacore tuna, trout and halibut.
4. Maintain a healthy weight.
5. Wear protective eyewear when playing sports or doing activities around the home, such as painting, yard work, and home repairs.
6. Quit smoking or never start.
7. Wear sunglasses that block 99 percent to 100 percent of ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) radiation.
8. Clean your hands prior to taking out your contact lens and be sure to cleanse your contact lenses properly to avoid the risk of infection.
9. Practice workplace eye safety.

Taking care of your eyes also may benefit your overall health. People with vision problems are more likely than those with good vision to have diabetes, poor hearing, heart problems, high blood pressure, lower back pain and stroke, as well as have increased risk for falls, accidents, and depression. Among people age 65 and older, 54.2 percent of those who are blind and 41.7 percent of those with impaired vision say their overall health is fair or poor. Just 21.5 percent of older Americans without vision problems reported fair to poor health.

Although older adults tend to have more vision problems, preschoolers may not see as well as they should. Just one out of seven preschoolers receives an eye screening, and fewer than one out of four receives some type of vision screening. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends vision screening for all children ages 3 to 5 years to find conditions such as amblyopia, or lazy eye, which can be treated effectively if caught early.

CDC's Vision Health Initiative team works with partners to promote vision health and quality of life for all populations, through all life stages, by preventing and controlling eye diseases, eye injury, and vision loss resulting in disability. The initiative is part of CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation.

Vision Health Initiative
http://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/

Check Out Those Eyes (PODCAST)
http://www2c.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=7002228

Eight Steps to Dental Health

Featuring Consumer Information from Columbia University College of Dental Medicine

1. **Understand your own oral health needs.**

   Your oral health depends on many factors that include what you eat, the type and amount of saliva in your mouth, your habits, your overall health and your oral hygiene routine. Changes in your overall health status often result in changes in your oral health. Many medicines can reduce the amount of saliva in your mouth, resulting in dry mouth.

2. **Commit to a daily oral health routine.**

   Talk to your dentist or dental hygienist about your oral health practices. Based on the discussion, come up with an effective routine. It should be easy to follow and should take your situation into account. For example, if you are taking medicine that dries your mouth, it is important to use fluoride every day. This is also recommended for people who have had many cavities.

3. **Use Fluoride products.**

   Everyone can benefit from fluoride, not just children. Fluoride strengthens developing teeth in children. It also helps prevent decay in adults and children. Toothpastes and mouthwashes are good sources of fluoride. Your dentist can prescribe a stronger concentration of fluoride in a gel, toothpaste or rinse if you need it. Gels are either brushed on or applied using a tray. Prescription products contain more fluoride and offer more protection against cavities than over- the-counter products.

4. **Brush and floss to remove plaque.**

   Everyone should brush at least twice a day. It's even better to brush three times a day or after every meal. In addition, you should floss at least once a day. These activities remove plaque, which is a complex mass of bacteria that constantly forms on your teeth. If plaque isn't removed every day, it can turn the sugars found in most foods and drinks into acids that lead to decay. Bacteria in plaque also cause gingivitis and other periodontal diseases. It's important to brush and floss correctly and thoroughly. You need to remove plaque from all sides of the tooth and where the tooth meets the gums. If plaque is not removed, it can lead to gum problems and cavities.

5. **Limit snacks, particularly those high in simple sugars, and eat a balanced breakfast.**

   Every time you eat, bits of food become lodged in and around your teeth. This food provides fuel for the bacteria in plaque. The bacteria produce acid. Each time you eat food containing sugars or starches (complex sugars), your teeth are exposed to these acids. This occurs more often if you eat snacks and the food stays on your teeth for awhile. These repeated acid attacks can break down the enamel surface of your teeth, leading to a cavity. If you must snack, brush your teeth or chew sugarless gum afterward. Gums that are sweetened with xylitol can also help to reduce the amount of bacteria that cause tooth decay. A balanced diet is also important. Not getting enough minerals and vitamins can affect your oral heath, as well as your general health.

6. **If you use tobacco in any form, quit.**

   Smoking or using smokeless tobacco increases your risk of oral cancer, gingivitis, periodontitis and tooth decay. Using tobacco also contributes to bad breathe and stains on your teeth.

7. **Examine your mouth regularly.**

   Even if you visit your dentist regularly, you are in the best position to notice changes in your mouth. Your dentist and dental hygienist see you only a few times a year, but you can examine your mouth weekly to look for changes that might be of concern. Changes in your mouth that you should look for include:

   - Swollen gums
   - Chipped teeth
   - Discolored teeth
   - Sores or lesions on your gums, cheeks or tongue

   A regular examination is particularly important for tobacco users, who are at increased risk of developing oral cancer. If you smoke or use smokeless tobacco, your dentist or dental hygienist can show you where a sore, spot, patch or lump is most likely to appear.

8. **Visit the dental office regularly.**

   Talk to your dentist about how often you should visit. If you have a history of cavities or crown and bridge work, or are wearing braces, you should visit the dentist more often. Some people, such as diabetics or smokers, have more gum disease than the general population. They also should visit the dentist more often. People with suppressed immune systems also are more likely to have dental problems. Examples include people who are infected with HIV or are receiving cancer treatment. More frequent visits for these groups are important to maintain good oral health.

Adult Stress— Frequently Asked Questions

Adult Stress— Frequently Asked Questions

How it affects your health and what you can do about it

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH National Institutes of Health *NIH...Turning Discovery Into Health*

Stress—just the word may be enough to set your nerves on edge. Everyone feels stressed from time to time. Some people may cope with stress more effectively or recover from stressful events quicker than others. It's important to know your limits when it comes to stress to avoid more serious health effects.

What is stress?

Stress can be defined as the brain's response to any demand. Many things can trigger this response, including change. Changes can be positive or negative, as well as real or perceived. They may be recurring, short-term, or long-term and may include things like commuting to and from school or work every day, traveling for a yearly vacation, or moving to another home. Changes can be mild and relatively harmless, such as winning a race, watching a scary movie, or riding a rollercoaster. Some changes are major, such as marriage or divorce, serious illness, or a car accident. Other changes are extreme, such as exposure to violence, and can lead to traumatic stress reactions.

How does stress affect the body?

Not all stress is bad. All animals have a stress response, which can be life-saving in some situations. The nerve chemicals and hormones released during such stressful times, prepares the animal to face a threat or flee to safety. When you face a dangerous situation, your pulse quickens, you breathe faster, your muscles tense, your brain uses more oxygen and increases activity—all functions aimed at survival. In the short term, it can even boost your immune system.

However, with chronic stress, those same nerve chemicals that are life-saving in short bursts can suppress functions that aren't needed for immediate survival. Your immunity is lowered and your digestive, excretory, and reproductive systems stop working normally. Once the threat has passed, other body systems act to restore normal functioning. Problems occur if the stress response goes on too long, such as when the source of stress is constant, or if the response continues after the danger has subsided.

How does stress affect your overall health?

There are at least three different types of stress, all of which carry physical and mental health risks:

- Routine stress related to the pressures of work, family, and other daily responsibilities.
- Stress brought about by a sudden negative change, such as losing a job, divorce, or illness.
- Traumatic stress, experienced in an event like a major accident, war, assault, or a natural disaster where one may be seriously hurt or in danger of being killed.

The body responds to each type of stress in similar ways. Different people may feel it in different ways. For example, some people experience mainly digestive symptoms, while others may have headaches, sleeplessness, depressed mood, anger, and irritability. People under chronic stress are prone to more frequent and severe viral infections, such as the flu or common cold, and vaccines, such as the flu shot, are less effective for them.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
National Institutes of Health

NIMH
National Institute of Mental Health

Of all the types of stress, changes in health from routine stress may be hardest to notice at first. Because the source of stress tends to be more constant than in cases of acute or traumatic stress, the body gets no clear signal to return to normal functioning. Over time, continued strain on your body from routine stress may lead to serious health problems, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, anxiety disorder, and other illnesses.

How can I cope with stress?

The effects of stress tend to build up over time. Taking practical steps to maintain your health and outlook can reduce or prevent these effects. The following are some tips that may help you to cope with stress:

- Seek help from a qualified mental health care provider if you are overwhelmed, feel you cannot cope, have suicidal thoughts, or are using drugs or alcohol to cope.
- Get proper health care for existing or new health problems.
- Stay in touch with people who can provide emotional and other support. Ask for help from friends, family, and community or religious organizations to reduce stress due to work burdens or family issues, such as caring for a loved one.
- Recognize signs of your body's response to stress, such as difficulty sleeping, increased alcohol and other substance use, being easily angered, feeling depressed, and having low energy.
- Set priorities—decide what must get done and what can wait, and learn to say no to new tasks if they are putting you into overload.
- Note what you have accomplished at the end of the day, not what you have been unable to do.
- Avoid dwelling on problems. If you can't do this on your own, seek help from a qualified mental health professional who can guide you.
- Exercise regularly—just 30 minutes per day of gentle walking can help boost mood and reduce stress.
- Schedule regular times for healthy and relaxing activities.
- Explore stress coping programs, which may incorporate meditation, yoga, tai chi, or other gentle exercises.

If you or someone you know is overwhelmed by stress, ask for help from a health professional. If you or someone close to you is in crisis, call the toll-free, 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).

Where can I find more information about stress?

Visit the National Library of Medicine's MedlinePlus at **http://medlineplus.gov**

En Español, **http://medlineplus.gov/spanish**

For information on clinical trials:

NIMH supported clinical trials
http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/trials/index.shtml

National Library of Medicine Clinical Trials Database
http://www.clinicaltrials.gov

Clinical trials at NIMH in Bethesda, MD
http://patientinfo.nimh.nih.gov

Information from NIMH is available in multiple formats. You can browse online, download documents in PDF, and order materials through the mail. Check the NIMH website at **http://www.nimh.nih.gov** for the latest information on this topic and to order publications. If you do not have Internet access, please contact the NIMH Information Resource Center at the numbers listed below.

National Institute of Mental Health
Science Writing, Press, and Dissemination Branch
6001 Executive Boulevard
Room 8184, MSC 9663
Bethesda, MD 20892-9663
Phone: 301-443-4513 or
1-866-615-NIMH (6464) toll-free
TTY: 301-443-8431 or
1-866-415-8051 toll-free
Fax: 301-443-4279
E-mail: **nimhinfo@nih.gov**
Website: **http://www.nimh.nih.gov**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
National Institutes of Health

NIMH
National Institute of Mental Health

The photo in this publication is of a model and is used for illustrative purposes only.

Tracking Health in Your Community

Two years after launch, the Environmental Public Health Tracking Network expands its reach and resources to better help protect the nation's health.

If protecting your family's health from the effects of the environment were as simple as doing a Google search would you try it? If your answer is "Yes!" the Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (Tracking Network) is just what you need. Information on the Tracking Network can help you protect your health.

The Tracking Network pulls together environmental and health data into one national on-line system. With the tap of a few computer keys, you can find out about the water you drink and the air you breathe—how do they compare to the counties around you? What can you do to limit your exposure to things like smog? You can learn about asthma rates where you live and see if they are higher or lower than other parts of your state.

A doctor or a nurse can use the Tracking Network to see if lead or carbon monoxide poisonings are high in their community and educate their patients about what they can do to help prevent those problems in their family. A new home buyer could use the Tracking Network to research water quality in a certain area of town.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched the Tracking Network two years ago. Since then, the Tracking Network has added new data and a new generation data query system. Now, data queries take less time and data displays are more dynamic and easier to create. Users also can sort data in many different ways, add layers to maps, and compare maps side-by-side.

The Tracking Network recently added new climate change content including data on temperature, heat index, and heat vulnerabilities. This data can help local communities develop interventions and better understand the possible health effects and risks to specific groups of people. Another addition to the Tracking Network is community design data, which includes information on types of transportation to work, motor vehicle-related fatalities, and more. The design and maintenance of communities may be related to chronic diseases, injury rates, and the effects of climate change.

During the past two years, public health officials used state tracking networks to identify growing asthma and lead-poisoning rates. They also found areas where drinking water was likely contaminated. As a result, steps were taken to protect and educate people about environmental hazards that could make them sick. Using the Tracking Network made decisions about public health actions both faster and easier.

Health Data on the Tracking Network

- Asthma
- Birth defects
- Cancer
- Carbon monoxide poisoning
- Childhood lead poisoning
- Heart attacks
- Pregnancy issues and birth outcomes

Environmental Data on the Tracking Network

- Air quality
- Climate change
- Community Design
- Community water
- Housing

Other Data on the Tracking Network:

- Population Characteristics

Over the past two years the Tracking Network's reach has grown to include 23 states. Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, South Carolina, and Vermont have joined the 16 states and New York City that were already tracking and reporting environment and health data. CDC aims for all 50 states to have tracking networks.

Plans include adding more data, such as information on biomonitoring, developmental disabilities, and cancer. In addition, the design and functionality of the online system will continue to improve.

Visit CDC's Tracking Network at
www.cdc.gov/ephtracking

For more information on other environmental public health issues, visit
www.cdc.gov/nceh

Healthy Community Design Toolkit

New tools empower people to include health in decisions about where they live, work and play

The Healthy Community Design Toolkit, a resource and website that provides information and education materials for individuals, local and public health officials, and planners to use in creating healthy communities, was released today by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Your address can play an important role in how long you live and how healthy you are," said Arthur Wendel, M.D., M.P.H., head of CDC's Healthy Community Design Initiative in the National Center for Environmental Health. "The physical design of your neighborhood affects your health every time you step out your front door. It's hard to be physically active when you don't have access to sidewalks, parks, clean air, or safe areas, and eating right is hard if healthy foods are not available."

Physical inactivity and obesity are leading risk factors for high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, stroke, and heart disease. Obese individuals spend 77 percent more money for necessary medications than non-obese persons. Just as characteristics of the environment create unsafe conditions or foster chronic diseases, certain aspects of the environment may promote health and well-being. For example, "designing walking trails and popup farmers markets throughout our communities can promote increased physical activity and healthy eating," Wendel said.

Since 2003, CDC has developed tools and techniques that educate people about how changing the physical design of their neighborhood can lead to healthier communities. The free online toolkit provides a variety of resources that are easy to read, understand, and use. They include:

- A checklist of questions for individuals, to help them consider and understand healthy community design elements, such as the building of homes and businesses near each other to encourage walking and biking to work and school, and shorter car trips.
- A customizable PowerPoint presentation on healthy community design that explains to individuals how the physical makeup of their neighborhood affects their health. The presentation also explains how people can use the checklist during land use discussions with local officials, planners, real estate agents, and health professionals. Subjects include healthier and more affordable food choices, to open spaces and parks that encourage people to get outside and be more active.
- A guide to CDC's Environmental Public Health Tracking Network and other online resources to find health data on a community. The data will help identify the most urgent health issues in a community, such as rates of asthma, heart disease, cancer, alcohol consumption and access to healthcare.
- A resource guide listing other audit tools, websites, checklists and pamphlets that can help residents, planners, public health and local officials create vibrant healthy neighborhoods.

"The scientific evidence is clear—physical characteristics of a community can affect an individual's physical and mental health," said Robin Ikeda, M.D., M.P.H., acting director of CDC's National Center for Environmental Health. "The Healthy Community Design Checklist Toolkit is the result of research that has progressed into a series of action steps. It gives individuals the power to make sure that physical changes in their community will enhance their health and the livability of their neighborhoods."

CDC developed the toolkit in partnership with the American Planning Association's (APA) Planning and Community Health Research Center to ensure that the kit would be a resource for everyone who wants to learn how planning can support better health.

Planning and public health have historically worked together to improve sanitation, water, and food systems. The toolkit is another way to connect these community needs. The toolkit, along with case studies of communities using the checklist and its principles, will be presented in April 2014 at the American Planning Association's National Conference in Atlanta.

The toolkit advances the National Prevention Strategy's commitment to healthy & safe community environments. The National Prevention Strategy, called for by the Affordable Care Act, envisions a prevention-oriented society where all sectors contribute to the health of individuals, families, and communities.

To learn more about CDC's Healthy Community Design Toolkit, Environmental Public Health Tracking Network or the agency's efforts to combat obesity please visit:
http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/toolkit/

http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/information/tracking_network.htm

http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/index.html

Fit Physical Activity Into Your Life, Your Way

The more you do, the more benefits you gain.

Adults gain substantial health benefits from two hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate aerobic physical activity, and children benefit from an hour or more of physical activity a day, according to the new Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. On October 7, 2008, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, a comprehensive set of recommendations for people of all ages and physical conditions.

The comprehensive, science-based guidelines were developed to inform policymakers and health providers about the amounts, types, and intensity of physical activity needed to help Americans aged 6 and older improve their health and reduce their risk of chronic diseases.

The Guidelines set achievable goals for everyone and can be customized according to a person's interests, lifestyle, and goals. Regular physical activity over months and years produces long-term health benefits and reduces the risk of many diseases. The more physically active you are, the more health benefits you gain.

A main message of the Guidelines is that for inactive persons some activity is better than none. Persons who have been inactive for some time are encouraged to start at a comfortable level and add a little more activity as they go along. For most health outcomes, additional benefits occur as the amount of physical activity increases through higher intensity, greater frequency, and /or more time per session. Both aerobic (endurance) and muscle-strengthening (resistance) activities are beneficial and are included as part of the Guidelines.

Resources also are available for the public including the booklet, *Be Active Your Way, A Guide to Adults.*

Easy-to-use information about the Guidelines is available online at
www.healthfinder.gov

To access the guidelines and to find links to other resources for professionals, visit
http://www.health.gov/paguidelines

and
http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity

Have Fun, Get Fit, Try Bicycling to Work!

Want to get in shape, get healthier, and get moving? Do you know the benefits or exercise, yet dread working out because you think it's too strenuous or too boring? Maybe it's time to rethink the way you bring physical activity into your life. Physical activity is anything that gets your body moving, including riding a bicycle to work – and that's why Americans are urged to try cycling for fun, fitness, and to bike to work for everyday transportation.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in partnership with the League of American Bicyclists and the American Public Health Association (APHA) observe both National Bicycle to Work Week and National Bike Month each May; and hundreds of communities across the United States participate in National Bicycle to Work Week.

According to Howard Frumkin M.D., Dr.P.H., who heads CDC's environmental health programs, "biking to everyday destinations is a great way to make physical activity a part of daily living. Designing and building our communities so biking and walking are safe alternatives to driving is important to our health."

Communities can get excited about biking, too. For example, employers can encourage and support bicycle commuting by providing bicycle racks or bicycle storage areas. Volunteers can organize bike trains or commuter convoys that enable bicyclists to ride to work together. Experienced cyclists can pair with a less experienced cyclist to provide the needed support to beginner bicycle commuters to get them started.

"Trading in your daily car commute for an idyllic bike ride isn't only good for our environment, it's the perfect way to incorporate regular physical activity into our typically over-packed, hectic schedules," said APHA Executive Director George Benjamin, MD. "Biking has always been an accessible, affordable and fun way to help maintain a healthy lifestyle. Plus, using a bicycle for daily transportation is a chance to reconnect with our communities and our neighbors."

To find bike trains or other events in your community contact your local bicycle organization or visit the League of American Bicyclists Bike Month event listing at ***http://www.bikeleague.org/content/making-biking-better***

For more information please visit www.cdc.gov or call 1- 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). For information on Healthy Places, visit ***http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/***

For information on Physical Activity visit ***http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/***

Healthy Weight – It's Not a Diet, It's a Lifestyle

When it comes to weight loss, there's no lack of fad diets promising fast results. But such diets limit your nutritional intake, can be unhealthy, and tend to fail in the long run. The key to achieving and maintaining a healthy weight isn't about short-term dietary changes. It's about a lifestyle that includes healthy eating, regular physical activity, and balancing the number of calories you consume with the number of calories your body uses.

Eat Healthfully and Enjoy It!

A healthy eating plan that helps you manage your weight includes a variety of foods you may not have considered.

- **Fresh fruits** – don't think just apples or bananas. These are great choices, but try some "exotic" fruits, too. How about a mango? Or a juicy pineapple or kiwi fruit! When your favorite fresh fruits aren't in season, try a frozen, canned, or dried variety of a fresh fruit you enjoy. Choose canned fruits that are packed in water or their own juice.
- **Fresh vegetables** – try something new. You may find that you love grilled vegetables or steamed vegetables with an herb you haven't tried like rosemary. You can sauté vegetables in a non-stick pan with a small amount of cooking spray. Or try frozen or canned vegetables for a quick side dish —just microwave and serve. When trying canned vegetables, look for vegetables without added salt, butter, or cream sauces.
- **Calcium-rich foods** – you may automatically think of a glass of low-fat or fat-free milk when someone says "eat more dairy products." But what about low-fat and fat-free yogurts without added sugars? These come in a wide variety of flavors and can be a great dessert substitute for those with a sweet tooth.
- **A new twist on an old favorite** – if your favorite recipe calls for frying fish or breaded chicken, try healthier variations using baking or grilling. Maybe even try a recipe that uses dry beans in place of higher-fat meats.

Why is physical activity important?

- Regular physical activity is important for good health, and it's especially important if you're trying to lose weight or to maintain a healthy weight.
- When losing weight, more physical activity increases the number of calories your body uses for energy or "burns off." The burning of calories through physical activity, combined with reducing the number of calories you eat, creates a "calorie deficit" that results in weight loss.
- Most weight loss occurs because of decreased caloric intake. However, evidence shows the only way to maintain weight loss is to be engaged in regular physical activity.
- Most importantly, physical activity reduces risks of cardiovascular disease and diabetes beyond that produced by weight reduction alone.

Physical activity also helps to:

- Maintain weight.
- Reduce high blood pressure.
- Reduce risk for type 2 diabetes, heart attack, stroke, and several forms of cancer.
- Reduce arthritis pain and associated disability.
- Reduce risk for osteoporosis and falls.
- Reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety.

How much physical activity do I need?

When it comes to weight management, people vary greatly in how much physical activity they need. Here are some guidelines to follow:

To maintain your weight: Work your way up to 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, or an equivalent mix of the two each week. Strong scientific evidence shows that physical activity can help you maintain your weight over time. However, the exact amount of physical activity needed to do this is not clear since it varies greatly from person to person. It's possible that you may need to do more than the equivalent of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity a week to maintain your weight.

To lose weight and keep it off: You will need a high amount of physical activity unless you also adjust your diet and reduce the amount of calories you're eating and drinking. Getting to and staying at a healthy weight requires both regular physical activity and a healthy eating plan.

For more information, please visit ***www.cdc.gov/healthyweight***

or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

Breakfast or Anytime: How to Enjoy Eggs Safely

However you take your eggs, make sure you enjoy them safely. It is important to take special care when handling and preparing fresh eggs to avoid getting sick from Salmonella Enteritidis. While eggs are one of nature's most nutritious and economical foods, egg-associated salmonellosis is a serious public health problem in the United States and several European countries. In the United States, we have estimated that one in 50 consumers could be exposed to a contaminated egg each year. If that egg is pooled with many other eggs, not fully cooked, or held at a warm temperature allowing the Salmonella germs to multiply, it can make many people ill.

A bacterium, Salmonella Enteritidis, can be inside perfectly normal eggs, and if the eggs are eaten raw or undercooked, the bacterium can cause illness. A person infected with Salmonella Enteritidis usually has fever, abdominal cramps, and diarrhea beginning 12 to 72 hours after consuming a contaminated food or beverage. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most persons recover without antibiotic treatment. However, the diarrhea can be severe, and hospitalization may be required. If you think you or a family member may have become ill from eating a contaminated egg, contact your health care provider. "Certain groups are at higher risk," says Dr. Casey Barton Behravesh, with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). "Infants, the elderly, and those with weaker immune systems are at increased risk for getting a Salmonella infection, as well as increased risk for having a more serious illness than can result in hospitalizations or even death."

According to Dr. Barton Behravesh, there are simple things you can do to enjoy eggs safely. Shell eggs are safest when stored in the refrigerator thoroughly cooked, and promptly consumed. The larger the number of Salmonella present in the egg, the more likely it is to cause illness. Keeping eggs refrigerated prevents any Salmonella present in the eggs from multiplying, so eggs should be held refrigerated until they are needed. Also, it is important to wash hands and all food contact surface areas (counter tops, utensils, and cutting boards) with soap and water after contact with raw eggs. Then, disinfect the food contact surfaces using a sanitizing agent, such as bleach, following label instructions. Thoroughly cooking an egg kills all the harmful bacteria; "partially" cooking an egg means that some harmful bacteria can survive which can cause illness. Both undercooked egg whites and yolks have been associated with outbreaks of Salmonella Enteritidis infections. Do not keep eggs warm or at room temperature for more than two hours.

Avoid eating raw eggs, undercooked eggs, and restaurant dishes made with raw or undercooked, unpasteurized eggs. If you like your eggs runny or cook a recipe that typically calls for raw eggs (such a Hollandaise sauce or a Caesar salad dressing) make sure you use only pasteurized eggs.

Egg Basics: Thorough cooking is an important step in making sure eggs are safe.

- **Scrambled eggs:** Cook until firm, not runny.
- **Fried, poached, boiled, or baked:** Cook until both the white and the yolk are firm.
- **Egg mixtures, such as casseroles:** Cook until the center of the mixture reaches 160 °F when measured with a food thermometer.

Food preparers should follow the easy lessons of "Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill":

Clean - Wash hands, utensils, and cutting boards before and after contact with raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs to avoid spreading bacteria when preparing food.

Separate - Use different cutting boards for meat, poultry, seafood, and vegetables and keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs apart from foods that won't be cooked.

Cook - Use a food thermometer - you can't tell if a food item is done by how it looks.

Chill - Keep your refrigerator at 40 degrees or below to keep bacteria from growing and chill leftovers and takeout foods within two hours.

For more information visit
www.cdc.gov/salmonella/enteritidis

or contact CDC at 1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

What's on Your Plate?

Vegetables	Fruits	Grains	Dairy	Protein Foods
Eat more red, orange, and dark-green veggies like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli in main dishes. Add beans or peas to salads (kidney or chickpeas), soups (split peas or lentils), and side dishes (pinto or baked beans), or serve as a main dish. Fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables all count. Choose "reduced sodium" or "no-salt-added" canned veggies.	Use fruits as snacks, salads, and desserts. At breakfast, top your cereal with bananas or strawberries; add blueberries to pancakes. Buy fruits that are dried, frozen, and canned (in water or 100% juice), as well as fresh fruits. Select 100% fruit juice when choosing juices.	Substitute whole-grain choices for refined-grain breads, bagels, rolls, breakfast cereals, crackers, rice, and pasta. Check the ingredients list on product labels for the words "whole" or "whole grain" before the grain ingredient name. Choose products that name a whole grain first on the ingredients list.	Choose skim (fat-free) or 1% (low-fat) milk. They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories. Top fruit salads and baked potatoes with low-fat yogurt. If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free milk or fortified soymilk (soy beverage).	Eat a variety of foods from the protein food group each week, such as seafood, beans and peas, and nuts as well as lean meats, poultry, and eggs. Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate. Choose lean meats and ground beef that are at least 90% lean. Trim or drain fat from meat and remove skin from poultry to cut fat and calories.
For a 2,000-calorie daily food plan, you need the amounts below from each food group. To find amounts personalized for you, go to Choose**MyPlate**.gov.				
Eat 2½ cups every day **What counts as a cup?** 1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or vegetable juice; 2 cups of leafy salad greens	**Eat 2 cups every day** **What counts as a cup?** 1 cup of raw or cooked fruit or 100% fruit juice; ½ cup dried fruit	**Eat 6 ounces every day** **What counts as an ounce?** 1 slice of bread; ½ cup of cooked rice, cereal, or pasta; 1 ounce of ready-to-eat cereal	**Get 3 cups every day** **What counts as a cup?** 1 cup of milk, yogurt, or fortified soymilk; 1½ ounces natural or 2 ounces processed cheese	**Eat 5½ ounces every day** **What counts as an ounce?** 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish; 1 egg; 1 Tbsp peanut butter; ½ ounce nuts or seeds; ¼ cup beans or peas

USDA U.S. Department of Agriculture • Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
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Cut back on sodium and empty calories from solid fats and added sugars

Look out for salt (sodium) in foods you buy. Compare sodium in foods and choose those with a lower number.

Drink water instead of sugary drinks. Eat sugary desserts less often.

Make foods that are high in solid fats—such as cakes, cookies, ice cream, pizza, cheese, sausages, and hot dogs—occasional choices, not every day foods.

Limit empty calories to less than 260 per day, based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Be physically active your way

Pick activities you like and do each for at least 10 minutes at a time. Every bit adds up, and health benefits increase as you spend more time being active.

Children and adolescents: get 60 minutes or more a day.

Adults: get 2 hours and 30 minutes or more a week of activity that requires moderate effort, such as brisk walking.

For more information visit
http://www.choosemyplate.gov/about.html

Heart Disease

Coronary Artery Disease

Coronary artery disease is the most common type of heart disease, affecting seven million Americans. It is a condition caused by thickening of the walls of the arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle. When these arteries become blocked, the heart doesn't get enough oxygen and it can become damaged.

Unfortunately, coronary artery disease develops so slowly there are no symptoms. People are often unaware that they have it, until they have a heart attack. So, it's important that you find out if you are at risk for coronary artery disease and if so, change your behaviors to avoid developing it and perhaps, having a heart attack.

Heart Disease and Diabetes

Heart disease is common in people with diabetes. In fact, statistics from the American Heart Association estimate that heart disease and stroke are responsible for two thirds to three fourths of the deaths amongst those with diabetes.

The most common cause of heart disease in a person with diabetes is hardening of the coronary arteries or atherosclerosis, which is a buildup of cholesterol in the blood vessels that supply oxygen and nutrition to the heart. This buildup of cholesterol usually begins before the increase in blood sugars that occurs in type 2 diabetes. In other words, heart disease almost always has established itself prior to the diagnosis of type 2 diabetes.

One of three Americans has genes for Type 2 Diabetes.

Reducing Your Risk

Risk factors for coronary artery disease include family history of heart disease, high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, obesity and physical inactivity. You can reduce your cholesterol and blood pressure, by exercising and managing your weight. Because nearly one third of all Americans with high blood pressure don't even know they have it, you should ask your doctor what your levels are for blood pressure and cholesterol. Certain foods can also help protect you against all types of heart disease; fiber, soy, fish and fish oils, antioxidant vitamins (vitamins C and E and carotenoids, such as beta carotene) and folic acid.

You can reduce your risk for coronary artery disease by not smoking, reducing your cholesterol and blood pressure, exercising and managing your weight.

Here are some helpful websites:

American Heart Association
www.americanheart.org

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

Everything you ever wanted to know about...

Blood Pressure

One in four Americans have high blood pressure (sometimes called hypertension). You can have high blood pressure and still feel fine. That's because high blood pressure does not cause symptoms that you can see or feel. The good news is that there are ways you can prevent high blood pressure and control it if you already have it.

What is Blood Pressure?

The blood pressure reading tells your doctor the pressure or force of the blood flowing through your blood vessels as your heart beats. Two numbers are read.

- **Systolic.** The first, or top number (the highest) is your systolic blood pressure, which tells you how much the blood flowing through your blood vessels pushes against the vessel walls as your heart beats.
- **Diastolic.** The second, or bottom (lower) number is your diastolic blood pressure. It shows the remaining pressure when the heart is resting between beats.

The harder your heart is working to pump your blood, the higher your blood pressure will be.

If you have high blood pressure, it is important to check it regularly. Keep a record, and report changes to your health care provider.

What Do the Numbers Tell Me?

Normal readings are less than 120 for the systolic (top) pressure, and less than 80 for the diastolic (bottom). For example, your pressure may be 119 over 79. This is written as 119/79.

Slightly high numbers, such as 125/83 mean you have **prehypertension**, that you might develop high blood pressure. Your doctor will probably ask you to make changes to your daily habits or diet to lower the numbers.

A top number of 140 or higher, with a bottom number of 90 or higher at two or more check-ups means you could have **high blood pressure**. The doctor will probably suggest medication, changes in your diet, and exercise.

If only one number is high, you may have **isolated systolic hypertension** or **isolated diastolic hypertension**. It is treated the same as high blood pressure.

What Causes High Blood Pressure?

You may be at risk for high blood pressure if anyone else in your family has the condition. The risk increases if you have other health concerns, such as smoking, obesity, and diabetes. High blood pressure can be caused by other diseases as well.

It is important to have regular blood pressure checks. Even though your blood pressure may be high, you probably will not feel sick. You will only know it's high when it is checked.

High blood pressure is a major health concern. If not treated, it can lead to stroke, heart disease, eye problems, or kidney failure. Even slightly high blood pressure can cause kidney and heart problems over time, or dementia.

Did You Know?

Approximately 75 million U.S. adults have high blood pressure.

That means nearly 1 in 3 adults in the U.S. has high blood pressure.

Approximately 20% of them are not even aware they have it.

Blood Pressure (continued)

CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC		DIASTOLIC
Normal	Less than 120	And	Less than 80
Prehypertension	120-139	Or	80-89
Stage 1 hypertension	140-159	Or	90-99
Stage 2 hypertension	160 or higher	Or	100 or higher

What are the effects of high blood pressure?

High blood pressure causes the heart to work harder, putting you at increased risk for stroke, heart attack, and kidney problems.

Anyone can develop high blood pressure regardless of race, age or gender. Once high blood pressure develops, it usually lasts a lifetime. You can prevent and control high blood pressure by taking action.

What can I do to help control my blood pressure?

Be physically active. Physical activity helps lower high blood pressure. New physical activity guidelines call for 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of moderate- intensity physical activity in a week. "Aerobic" activity is better for conditioning your heart and lungs. Examples include brisk walking, swimming, bicycling, and running.

Maintain a healthy weight. Losing extra pounds is very important in reducing high blood pressure. Losing as few as 10 pounds can reduce blood pressure in many overweight people. It also enhances the blood pressure lowering effect of medication and helps reduce other risk factors associated with heart disease such as diabetes.

Cut down on salt and sodium. Sodium occurs naturally in foods. A low-salt diet might help lower your blood pressure. Talk with your doctor about your salt intake.

Drink less alcohol. *If you drink alcohol, you should do so in moderation—no more than one drink per day for women or two drinks per day for men.

Healthy diet. To control high blood pressure, eat a diet rich in these foods: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy foods. Follow the DASH Diet or **D**ietary **A**pproaches to **S**top **H**ypertension. Studies show people with high blood pressure who follow the DASH Diet show a reduction in blood pressure. DASH focuses on increasing servings of fruits, vegetables, and lowfat dairy products, while decreasing sodium and saturated fat.

Here are some helpful websites:

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new_dash.pdf

www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure

Up-to-date, quality health care information. Go to Health Topics, "High Blood Pressure." The "Interactive Tutorial" is also very helpful.
www.medlineplus.gov

American Heart Association – High Blood Pressure.
Google

Blood pressure topics.
www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/hbp

Two Blood Pressure Myths:

Myth No. 1: 120/80 is normal blood pressure.

Reality: 120/80 used to be the normal blood pressure. Now-a-days, as per the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, a healthy blood pressure is defined as a blood pressure that is less than 120/80. This is because, now, blood pressures as low as 115/75 can also cause heart attacks, strokes, and other cardiovascular diseases.

Myth No. 2: If you have high cholesterol, you automatically have high blood pressure.

False. High cholesterol doesn't automatically lead to high BP, but many of the same lifestyle habits that may increase blood cholesterol levels also may cause elevated blood pressure. Diets, high in saturated fat, lack of physical activity and drinking too much alcohol.

Do You Know the Signs of a Stroke? Think F-A-S-T!

You might be at higher risk if:

- You have high blood pressure
- You have heart disease
- You smoke cigarettes
- You have diabetes
- You are overweight or physically inactive
- You have atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeats).

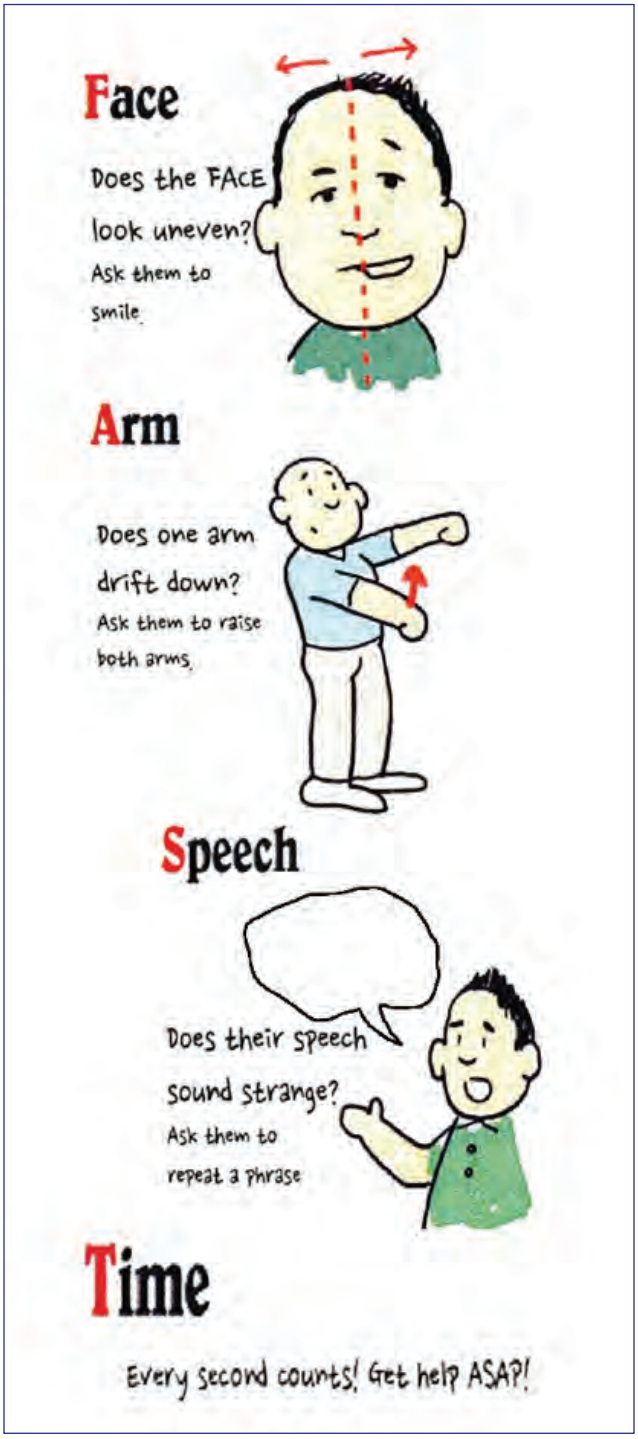
Do not ignore any of these signs even if they last only a short time.

A Stroke is something that can happen to, not only the elderly, but quite often to those in their mid 30s or 40s.

If you suspect someone is having a stroke, don't wait, and don't try to drive them to the emergency room yourself. Studies show patients get treated an average of 30 minutes faster when they arrive by ambulance than by private car.

Call 9-1-1 right away!

If any of the three main warning signs of stroke - Smile, Reach, Speech is abnormal, there is a 72% chance the person is having a stroke.



Visit us at
www.strokeassociation.org

Ten Best Foods for Your Heart

Oatmeal

Start your day with a steaming bowl of oats, which are full of omega-3 fatty acids, folate, and potassium. This fiber-rich superfood can lower levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol and help keep arteries clear.

Salmon

Super-rich in omega-3 fatty acids, salmon can effectively reduce blood pressure and keep clotting at bay. Aim for two servings per week, which may reduce your risk of dying of a heart attack by up to one-third. Be sure to choose wild salmon over farm-raised fish, which can be packed with insecticides, pesticides, and heavy metals.

Avocado

Add a bit of avocado to a sandwich or spinach salad to up the amount of heart-healthy fats in your diet. Packed with monounsaturated fat, avocados can help lower LDL levels while raising the amount of HDL cholesterol in your body.

Olive Oil

Full of monounsaturated fats, olive oil lowers bad LDL cholesterol and reduces your risk of developing heart disease. Look for extra- virgin or virgin varieties--they're the least processed—and use them instead of butter when cooking.

Nuts

Walnuts are full of omega-3 fatty acids and, along with almonds and macadamia nuts, are loaded with mono and polyunsaturated fat. Plus, nuts increase fiber in the diet. And like olive oil, they are a great source of healthy fat.

Berries

Blueberries, raspberries, strawberries--whatever berry you like—best are full of anti-inflammatories, which reduce your risk of heart disease and cancer. Blackberries and blueberries are especially great.

Spinach

Spinach can help keep your ticker in top shape thanks to its stores of lutein, folate, potassium, and fiber. In a study of 15,000 men without heart disease (for 12 year period) those who ate at least 2 1/2 servings of vegetables each day cut their risk of heart disease by about 25%, compared with those who didn't eat the veggies. Each additional serving reduced risk by another 17%.

Legumes

Fill up on fiber with lentils, chickpeas, and kidney beans. They're packed with omega-3 fatty acids, calcium, and soluble fiber.

Flaxseed

Full of fiber and omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, a little sprinkling of flaxseed can go a long way for your heart. Top a bowl of oatmeal or whole-grain cereal with a smidgen of ground flaxseed for the ultimate heart-healthy breakfast.

Soy

Soy may lower cholesterol, and since it is low in saturated fat, it's still a great source of lean protein in a heart-healthy diet.

Look for natural sources of soy, like tempeh, or organic silken tofu. And soy milk is a great addition to a bowl of oatmeal or whole-grain cereal. But watch the amount of salt in your soy. Some soy hot dogs can contain added sodium.

The Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Once you quit, your body starts to heal itself immediately, reports the Mayo Clinic. Within 20 minutes your blood pressure can dip to normal, within 24 hours your chance of heart attack decreases, within 9 months your lungs start to get healthier. Over time, you'll reduce your risk for cancer and stroke, and you'll save the money you would have spent on cigarettes.

When you stop smoking you also increase the health of those around you. Secondhand smoke can cause ear infections and aggravated breathing problems in children and increase the risk of heart disease in adults.

How to quit

There is no one way to quit smoking. Some people quit cold turkey and others use nicotine gums or patches. To find the method that's right for you, talk to your doctor, call the nurse consulting line sponsored by your health plan or consider online programs, such as the American Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking Program.

Make sure you have a good support system of family, friends and co-workers.

Stop Smoking

Smoking and Tobacco related health complications are the single largest cause of preventable, premature death in the U.S.

Not only do smokers die 10 to 12 years earlier than nonsmokers, they also cost the U.S. $97.2 billion in medical costs and lost productivity each year. If you smoke, quitting will improve your health and will save you unnecessary medical bills later on.

According to the Mayo Clinic, more Americans die from smoking related disease than from drug abuse, alcohol, AIDS, car accidents, fire, suicide and murder combined.

Visit us at
www.cdc.gov/tobacco

Tips to Protect Parents and Kids From Tobacco Smoke

This year, thank a parent who recently quit smoking. An estimated 20 percent of adults in the United States smoke cigarettes, and 7 out of 10 of them want to quit. Some adults who have quit smoking are parents, and their efforts to become smoke-free have made them role models for their children as well as other smokers in their families and communities. Did one of your parents quit smoking? If so, click on the following link and honor their decision by sending them an appreciation e-card: http://www2c.cdc.gov/ecards/index.asp?category=201.

Other parents continue to struggle with addiction to tobacco. Let parents who smoke know that they've taken great care of their families and that now you want them to do something important for themselves: quit smoking. Let them know that you are supportive. Smoking cessation treatment and social support derived from family and friends improve cessation rates. Send a supportive e-card that encourages them to quit. And let them know of the tremendous health benefits they will experience after quitting by visiting www.cdc.gov/tobacco.

For women planning to have children, it is important to understand the health risks associated with tobacco use. Smoking increases risk for adverse pregnancy-related health outcomes, including infertility, spontaneous abortion, premature rupture of membranes, low birth weight, neonatal mortality, stillbirth, preterm delivery, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

ALL parents can protect their children from the dangers of secondhand smoke. Many parents already understand that breathing even a small amount of secondhand smoke can be dangerous, and they take steps to keep their children safe. But not everyone knows that there is no safe amount of secondhand smoke, that tobacco smoke contains a deadly mix of more than 7,000 chemicals (including toxic substances like formaldehyde, arsenic, lead, carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, ammonia, and butane), and that each year more than 300,000 children suffer from infections caused by secondhand smoke (including bronchitis, pneumonia, and ear infections).

The following tips can help all parents protect their children:

- Do not let people smoke around your children, and teach your children about the health risks of tobacco use and secondhand smoke.
- Look for restaurants and other places that do not allow smoking, and let owners of businesses that are not smoke-free know that smoke bothers you and that a "no-smoking" section is not good enough. Separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating buildings do NOT eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke.
- Make sure your children's day care centers and schools are tobacco-free. A tobacco-free campus policy prohibits any tobacco use or advertising on school property by anyone at any time. This includes off-campus school events.
- Make your home and car completely smoke-free. Opening a window does not protect you or your children from secondhand smoke.

For more on the health consequences of smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke, as well as resources on how to quit, consult the following:

Secondhand Smoke: What it Means to You at
http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2006/consumer_summary/index.htm

How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: What it Means to You at
http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2006/consumer_summary/index.htm

Vital Signs: Tobacco Use at
http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/TobaccoUse/Smoking/

For additional quitting help visit
www.smokefree.gov
www.women.smokefree.gov

or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

Reducing the Harms from Drinking too Much by Limiting Access to Alcohol

Excessive alcohol use in the U.S. takes an enormous toll on individuals, families, and communities. One way to help people drink less and to prevent the dangers that arise from drinking too much is to limit access to purchasing alcohol at the state or community levels. Research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Guide to Community Preventive Services (Community Guide) shows that regulating the availability of alcohol, including maintaining limits on the number of days and hours when alcohol can be sold, is a strategy that works to reduce excessive alcohol use and related health and social problems.

When states or communities increase the number of hours and days when alcohol can be sold in bars, restaurants, and liquor stores, the result is more drinking and more harms from drinking, especially motor-vehicle crashes. The Community Guide studies found that people are more likely to experience harms from drinking too much, including motor-vehicle crashes, violence, assault and injuries, when national, state, and local policies remove previously banned alcohol sales on weekend days (usually Sundays) or when communities increase the hours that alcohol can be sold by two or more hours. At the same time, when governments create new limits on the days of alcohol sale, this helps to protect community residents, even non-drinkers, from experiencing the many harms of excessive drinking.

The Community Guide studies, which were posted online by the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, considered all of the scientific evidence on what happens when changing the days or hours when alcohol can be sold. Thirteen studies of the effects of changes in the days of sale and ten studies of the effects of changing the hours of sale were analyzed using a state-of-the-art systematic review process. After reviewing all of the best available scientific evidence, the U.S. Task Force on Community Preventive Services, an independent, nonfederal body of public health experts, recommended maintaining limits on the days or hours during which alcohol can legally be sold to protect the public's health.

Visit
www.thecommunityguide.org

Community prevention that works
States and communities can decide when and where alcohol can be sold by supporting laws that are proven to reduce excessive alcohol use and related harms to drinkers and others. Regulating the availability of alcohol, including maintaining limits on the number of days and hours when alcohol can be sold, as well as the number of places that sell alcohol, are strategies proven to reduce many of the harmful outcomes of drinking too much alcohol, even for non-drinkers.

Excessive alcohol use
Excessive alcohol use, including binge and underage drinking, is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States. This dangerous behavior is responsible for more than 79,000 deaths annually and a wide range of health and social problems. For each death due to alcohol, on average, an individual's life is cut short by 30 years. Excessive alcohol use costs the U.S. approximately $185 billion each year in health care and criminal justice expenses, as well as lost worker productivity.

The Community Guide
The Community Guide is an essential resource for people who want to know what works in public health. It provides evidence-based recommendations and findings about public health interventions and policies to improve health and promote safety. The Task Force on Community Preventive Services (Task Force) -- an independent, nonfederal, volunteer body of public health and prevention experts -- makes these findings and recommendations based on systematic reviews of scientific literature conducted under the auspices of the Community Guide. CDC staff provides ongoing scientific, administrative and technical support for the Task Force.

Scientific methods
The Community Guide conducts state-of-the-art systematic reviews that: analyze all available scientific evidence on what works to promote health and prevent disease, injury and disability; assess the economic benefits of the interventions found to be effective; and identify critical research gaps. Community Guide review teams are led or supported by Community Guide scientists, and include government, academic, policy and practice-based partners.

Spring Break Into Health

Make this year's spring break memorable by having fun and helping yourself, your friends, and others stay safe and healthy.

Limit alcohol.
If drinking alcohol is part of your break, remember that it can impair your judgment and actions. Don't drink and drive. Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes kill 32 people every day in the U.S. This amounts to one death every 45 minutes.

Be active.
Most of the year, you've probably been sitting while working at the computer, studying, or in class.. During the break, take the opportunity to start a fitness program. Do a variety of fun activities like walking, dancing, playing volleyball, swimming, and more. It doesn't need to be hard to be beneficial. Avoid injury by starting any new activity slowly. Be active for at least 2½ hours a week and include activities that raise your breathing and heart rates and that strengthen your muscles.

Plan a successful trip.
If you are going on a trip, be prepared. Consider that extra planning may be necessary for your destination. Are vaccinations required? If you are taking medications, do you have enough for the trip? Know what's happening en route or at your travel destination.

Protect yourself.
Love is all around, and so are sexually transmitted diseases. The only 100% sure way to prevent sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancy is by not having sex. If you choose to have sex, using latex condoms and having a monogamous, uninfected partner may help lower your risk.

Women are more likely to be victims of sexual violence than men. Women who experience both sexual and physical abuse are significantly more likely to have sexually transmitted infections. Take precautions and avoid situations or persons that may place you at risk for harm.

Watch your step.
There may be temptations on your break that involve new, different or high-risk activity. Think twice before putting yourself at risk for injury. Remember that injuries (both unintentional and those caused by acts of violence) are among the top ten killers for Americans of all ages. Before venturing out, be sure to use appropriate safety gear such as seat belts, life vests, or knee pads. Never drive distracted. That includes not using cell phones, texting, or engaging in other activities that will cause a distraction, such as eating.

Know the ropes.
When swimming and boating, know what's expected and what you can do to prevent injury or death for yourself and others. Know how to swim. Wear your life jacket while boating. Avoid alcoholic beverages while boating. Complete a boating education course. Participate in the vessel safety check program.

Protect yourself from the sun.
After a cold winter, it's tempting to stay in the hot sun all day. Although getting a little sun can have some benefits, excessive and unprotected sun exposure can result in premature aging, changes in skin texture, and skin cancer. Always wear sunscreen with at least SPF 15. For eye protection, wear wraparound sunglasses that provide 100 percent UV ray protection.

Eat healthy.
Having fun takes energy and fuel. Be sure to eat a variety of foods, including plenty of vegetables, fruits, and whole grain products. Also include low-fat dairy products, lean meats, poultry, fish, and legumes. Drink lots of water and go easy on the salt, sugar, alcohol, and saturated fat. Good nutrition should be part of an overall healthy lifestyle, including regular physical activity, not smoking, and stress management.

Be smoke-free.
Avoid smoking and secondhand smoke. Quitting is one of the best things you can do for yourself and others. Just 20 minutes after smoking that last cigarette, your body begins a series of positive changes that continue for years.

Get help.
If you or a friend has an alcohol or drug problem, has thoughts of suicide, or is in crisis for any reason, get help. Call 911 for emergency services, 800-662-4357 for substance abuse help, and 800-273-TALK (8255) for the national suicide prevention lifeline.

*Visit **www.cdc.gov** or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for more information on staying safe and healthy.*

Keep Mosquitoes and Ticks From Bugging You This Summer: Take Steps to Prevent Bites

Summer allows more time for children to play outdoors, but when kids are covered with bug bites after spending time outside, parents may start to worry about disease spread by ticks, such as Lyme disease, or by mosquitoes, such as West Nile virus. Luckily, parents can take simple steps to prevent bites and diseases spread by bugs.

Use an Effective Insect Repellent

Parents may feel overwhelmed by the many bug protection products in the grocery aisle, wondering which ones are best. CDC recommends a variety of effective products. Check the label for one of the following active ingredients:

- DEET
- Picaridin
- IR 3535
- Oil of lemon eucalyptus

Most pediatricians recommend using products with 30 percent or less of these ingredients on kids. Once you've bought an insect repellent, use it whenever you and your children are outdoors. Put a few bottles or packets of repellent anywhere you might need them– in the car, by the door, in your bag. Make it easy so you'll remember. As hard as it may be to think about, any single bug bite has the potential to bring illness, so it's worth taking a moment for prevention.

Make Your Backyard a Tick-safe Zone

While you may think that ticks only live in the woods, ticks can also lurk in backyards. You can take some simple steps to make your backyard more tick-safe. Keep patios, play areas, and playground equipment away from shrubs, bushes, and other vegetation. Also, tick control chemicals are available for use by homeowners, or can be applied by a professional pest control expert.

For more information, please visit ***www.cdc.gov/westnile*** *or* ***www.cdc.gov/lyme*** *or call CDC Info at 1-800-CDC-INFO.*

Check for Ticks

After playing outside, don't make ticks an uninvited guest in your home. Ticks can ride in on parents, kids, and even the family pet, so check your gear and pets as soon as you get inside, even if your outdoor adventures were only in the backyard.

Parents should check themselves and their children for ticks under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist and especially in the hair.

If you find a tick, remove it using fine-tipped tweezers as soon as you notice it. If a tick is attached to your skin for less than 24 hours, your chance of getting Lyme disease is extremely small. But to be safe, watch for signs or symptoms of Lyme disease such as rash or fever, and see a doctor if they develop.

Bathing when you get inside can also help you find ticks and remove them. Additionally, you can tumble clothes in a dryer on high heat for an hour to kill any remaining ticks.

By following simple prevention steps, parents and kids can keep pests away so they can focus on fun outdoor activities like gardening, camping, hiking and just playing outdoors.

Recreational Water Illness (RWI) Prevention: Take Action and Stay Healthy!

Swimming is great exercise with many health benefits, but the water you swim in can also spread germs that can make you sick and cause illnesses known as recreational water illnesses (RWIs).

The germs that cause RWIs are spread when you swallow, breathe in the mists from, or have contact with contaminated water from pools, water parks, hot tubs, lakes, oceans, and any other type of water used for recreation.

Since the mid-1980s, the number of reported RWI outbreaks has increased substantially, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The most common recreational water illness is diarrhea, which is often caused by the germs Cryptosporidium ("Crypto") and Giardia. Other common RWIs include skin, ear, respiratory, eye, neurologic, and wound infections.

The best way to prevent illness when swimming is to stop the germs from getting into the water and to make sure that recreational water facilities properly filter and disinfect the water. Although pool inspectors check to make sure these facilities are properly maintained, they can't be at every pool every day.

A CDC study found that 1 in 8 public pool inspections conducted in 13 states in 2008 resulted in pools being closed immediately due to serious code violations. Overall, child care pools had the highest percentage of inspections resulting in closures (17.2%), followed by hotel/motel pools (15.3%), and apartment/condo pools (12.4%).

To help stay healthy every time you swim, take an active role in stopping the spread of germs by following the Triple A's of Healthy Swimming: Awareness, Action, and Advocacy.

Awareness

- Visit CDC's Healthy Swimming website www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming to learn more about staying healthy.
- Follow the Six Steps for Healthy Swimming.
    1. Don't swim when you have diarrhea.
    2. Don't swallow pool water.
    3. Practice good hygiene. Shower with soap before swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
    4. Take your kids on bathroom breaks or check diapers often.
    5. Change diapers in a bathroom or a diaper-changing area and not at poolside.
    6. Wash your child thoroughly (especially the rear end) with soap and water before swimming.

Action

- Check pool water yourself using test strips purchased at your local hardware or pool supply store. CDC recommends the following water quality ranges to kill germs:
    - free chlorine levels at 1–3 parts per million (ppm)
    - pH 7.2–7.8
- Ask the pool operator:
    - Are the free chlorine and pH levels checked at least twice a day and more often when the pool is heavily used?
    - What is the latest pool inspection score?
    - Has the operator completed specialized training in pool operation?

Advocacy

- Encourage pool operators to take steps known to kill germs.
    - Add ultraviolet or ozone technology to treat water or Hyperchlorinate (add additional chlorine to the pool) regularly
- Educate others about RWIs and promote healthy swimming behaviors.

For more information about the Triple A's of Healthy Swimming, visit ***www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming.***

For more information about pool inspections and common pool code violations, visit ***http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5919a2.htm.***

For more information on healthy swimming, call 1-800-CDC-INFO or visit ***www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming.***

Bon Voyage!
Tips for Healthy Travel

Whether you plan to travel to the tropics or hit the slopes at a snowy resort, don't forget to plan for your health! While every destination is different, these tips can help you plan for a safe and healthy trip.

Learn about your destination
Visit the CDC travel health website at www.cdc.gov/travel to learn of any health risks or travel warnings in effect in the country you're planning to visit. It is also important to understand the laws and culture of the places you will be visiting. You can learn about countries by using many different resources such as websites, guidebooks, and other media.

Think about your health status
No one wants to miss or postpone a trip, but there are times when staying home might be best for health reasons. Have you had any recent illnesses, injuries, or surgeries? Do you have any special health needs, due to disability, pregnancy or a compromised immune system? Take these questions into consideration before you leave home.

See your doctor
The best time to see your doctor is 4-6 weeks before traveling. If it is less than 4 weeks before you leave, you should still see your doctor. You might still benefit from shots or medications and information about how to protect yourself from illness and injury while traveling.

Pack Smart
If you're traveling abroad, it is important to bring copies of your passport and travel documents. Place a copy of your passport and travel documents in each piece of luggage, in case you lose the original documents. Don't forget to leave a copy with a friend or relative at home.

A travel health kit can help make your trip a safe and healthy one.
If you are traveling with prescription medications, bring a copy of your prescription. Pack a note on letterhead stationery from the prescribing physician if you are bringing controlled substances and injectable medications.

For More Information visit

http://www.cdc.gov/travel

Call 1-800-CDC-INFO

Plan ahead for illness or injury
Check your health insurance plan to see if they will cover your health needs abroad. Think about purchasing additional health insurance for your trip if your health insurance does not cover you while you are traveling. Pay attention to your health during your trip, and see a doctor if you are injured or feel ill.

What to include in your Travel Heath Kit:

- Prescribed medicine
- Over-the-counter medicine
  - Anti-diarrheal medication
  - Antihistamine
  - Decongestant
  - Anti-motion sickness medication
  - Medicine for pain or fever
  - Mild laxative
  - Cough suppressant/expectorant
  - Cough drops
  - Antacid
  - Antifungal and antibacterial ointments or creams
  - 1% hydrocortisone cream
- First aid supplies
  - First aid quick reference card
  - Basic first-aid items (bandages, gauze, Ace bandage, antiseptic, tweezers, scissors, cotton-tipped applicators)
  - Moleskin for blisters
  - Aloe gel for sunburns
  - Digital thermometer
  - Oral rehydration solution packets
- Sunscreen (SPF 15 or above)
  - Insect repellent
  - Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
  - Health insurance card and copies of claim forms

Sniffle or Sneeze? No Antibiotics Please

CDC advises parents about colds, flu and antibiotics

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has news for parents this cold and flu season: antibiotics don't work for a cold or the flu.

Antibiotics kill bacteria, not viruses. And colds, flu and most sore throats are caused by viruses. Antibiotics don't touch viruses—never have, never will. And it's not really news. It's a long-documented medical fact. But tell that to parents seeking relief for a child's runny nose. Research shows that most Americans have either missed the message about appropriate antibiotic use or they simply don't believe it. It's a case of mistaken popular belief winning out over fact. According to public opinion research, there is a perception that "antibiotics cure everything."

Americans believe in the power of antibiotics so much that many patients go to the doctor expecting to get a prescription. And they do. Why? Physicians often are too pressured for time to engage in lengthy explanations of why antibiotics won't work. And, when the diagnosis is uncertain—as many symptoms for viral and bacterial infections are similar—doctors are more likely to yield to patient demands for antibiotics.

Risk of antibiotic-resistance

The problem is, taking antibiotics when they are not needed can do more harm than good. Widespread inappropriate use of antibiotics is fueling an increase in drug-resistant bacteria. And sick individuals aren't the only people who can suffer the consequences.

Families and entire communities feel the impact when disease-causing germs become resistant to antibiotics.

The most obvious consequence of inappropriate antibiotic use is its effect on the sick patient. When antibiotics are incorrectly used to treat children or adults with viral infections, such as colds and flu, they aren't getting the best care for their condition. A course of antibiotics won't fight the virus, make the patient feel better, yield a quicker recovery or keep others from getting sick.

A less obvious consequence of antibiotic overuse is the boost it gives to drug-resistant disease-causing bacteria. Almost every type of bacteria has become stronger and less responsive to antibiotic treatment when it really is needed. These antibiotic-resistant bacteria can quickly spread to family members, school mates and co-workers—threatening the community with a new strain of infectious disease that is more difficult to cure and more expensive to treat.

According to the CDC, antibiotic resistance is one of the world's most pressing public health problems. Americans of all ages can lower this risk by talking to their doctors and using antibiotics appropriately during this cold and flu season.

What to do for colds and flu

- Children and adults with viral infections recover when the illness has run its course. Colds caused by viruses may last for two weeks or longer.
- Measures that can help a person with a cold or flu feel better:
  - Increase fluid intake
  - Use a cool mist vaporizer or saline nasal spray to relieve congestion
  - Soothe throat with ice chips, sore throat spray or lozenges (for older children and adults)
- Viral infections may sometimes lead to bacterial infections. Patients should keep their doctor informed if their illness gets worse or lasts a long time.

Got Diabetes? Get Your Flu Vaccine During National Diabetes Month

November is National Diabetes Month in the United States, and November 14 is World Diabetes Day. These occasions shine a spotlight on a serious disease that can lead to potentially life-threatening complications such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, blindness and amputation.

November also offers people with diabetes an important opportunity to protect themselves against influenza—a respiratory illness commonly known as "the flu"—by getting a flu shot. While CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older get vaccinated against the flu, it's particularly important that people with diabetes, and certain other medical conditions, protect themselves from the flu with a flu shot, even if their diabetes is well-controlled. If you have diabetes, you should not get the nasal spray flu vaccine.

People with either type 1 or type 2 diabetes are at increased risk of developing serious flu-related complications. When a person with diabetes gets sick with the flu, it may be difficult to maintain their regular diet or medication regimen, which can both lead to changes in blood glucose levels. People with diabetes may have a harder time fighting infections like the flu. Studies have shown that the flu can lead to secondary infections like pneumococcal pneumonia (people with diabetes should also get the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV) or other medical complications such as ketoacidosis. Flu-related complications like these can result in hospitalization and, in extreme cases, even death.

The burden of flu on people with diabetes was demonstrated last season, when people with metabolic disorders (of which diabetes was the most common) accounted for 36 percent of reported flu-related hospitalizations in the United States according to CDC. "This is striking considering that people with diabetes make up only about 8 percent of the U.S. population," says Dr. Pamela Allweiss of the CDC Division of Diabetes Translation.

"Although worrisome, these statistics should, hopefully, motivate people with diabetes to protect themselves against the flu," says Dr. Anne Schuchat, Director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases.

There has been little flu activity in the United States so far this season, but this is not unusual. Most flu seasons don't peak until February. Dr. Schuchat urges people not to be complacent. "While the exact timing of flu outbreaks and their severity are unpredictable, we do know that they will occur. The best time to get vaccinated is before people around you are becoming ill."

For more than 50 years, hundreds of millions of people have safely received flu vaccines in the United States. The vaccine cannot give you the flu, and it has been shown to decrease the number of flu-related hospitalizations and deaths in people with diabetes. The most common side effects from flu shots are soreness and redness where the shot is given and, occasionally, body aches or low grade fever. The risk of severe side effects is very rare.

Nearly 26 million Americans are living with diabetes and more than one-quarter of them do not know it. If you or one of your loved ones has diabetes, National Diabetes Month is a great time to protect yourself against the flu by getting a flu shot.

For more information, visit

www.cdc.gov/flu/diabetes

or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

What You Need to Know About Vaccine Safety

Vaccines are one of the greatest success stories in public health and have put an end to smallpox, nearly rid the world of polio, and greatly reduced cases and outbreaks of many infectious illnesses, such as measles, to all-time low levels.

The United States has access to the safest, most effective vaccines in history. By law before a vaccine can be licensed in the US it must undergo very extensive testing. Once in use, vaccines are continually monitored for safety and efficacy. Vaccines are our best defense against infectious diseases, but no vaccine is 100 percent safe or 100 percent effective.

Are Vaccines Tested and Monitored for Safety?
Yes. Vaccines are held to the highest standards for safety. Before a vaccine is licensed in the US, the FDA requires testing to ensure safety. After it is licensed, the FDA requires the vaccine's manufacturer to routinely submit samples from each vaccine lot for testing before its release. Manufacturers must also submit their own test results for each vaccine lot's safety, potency, and purity.

Once a vaccine is in use, CDC and FDA monitor its safety through the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). This system collects reports from healthcare providers, vaccine manufacturers, and the general public. An adverse event is any health problem or side effect that happens after a vaccination. VAERS cannot determine if an adverse event was caused by a vaccine, but can help determine if more investigations are needed. If researchers find a vaccine may be causing a serious side effect, CDC and FDA will investigate further and take appropriate action. This may include distributing safety alerts, inspecting the vaccine manufacturer's facilities and records, changing the instructions to providers on the vaccine label and/or in the package insert, restricting who may receive the vaccine by withdrawing recommendations for its use, or discontinuing the vaccine's license.

Who Should Not Be Vaccinated?
Some people should not get certain vaccines or should wait to get them. Specific information for each vaccine is found in the vaccine's package insert. For instance, individuals with a weakened immune system, as occurs with cancer treatment, often need to wait to be vaccinated. Also, if a person has had a severe allergic reaction to a vaccine, a second dose is not recommended. However, a person with a mild, common illness, such as a cold with a low-grade fever, does not have to wait to be vaccinated.

What Vaccine Side Effects Occur and Why?

- Each person is unique and may react differently to an immunization.
- In most persons, vaccines are effective and often only cause mild reactions such as fever or soreness at the injection site.
- Some people may experience a more serious side effect, such as an allergic reaction, but these events are very rare and it may be very difficult to identify these individuals.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have any health problems or known allergies to medications or food.

What Should I Do If Someone Has a Reaction to a Vaccine?

- If the reaction is severe call a doctor or take the person to a doctor immediately.
- Tell your doctor what happened, when it happened, and when the vaccination was given.
- Ask your doctor, nurse, or health department to file a VAERS form, or call VAERS yourself at 1-800-822-7967.

For more information on vaccine safety and to receive updates on vaccine safety, visit ***www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety*** *or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.*

For more information on VAERS, visit ***www.vaers.hhs.gov.***

Every Family Has Secrets! Could Diabetes Be One of Them?

Do you know your family's health history? Or is it like a secret no one wants to talk about? Many health conditions, including type 2 diabetes, run in families. Many people who get type 2 diabetes have one or more family members with the disease.

Almost 24 million Americans have diabetes, a serious disease in which blood glucose (blood sugar) levels are above normal. Most people with diabetes have type 2, which used to be called adult-onset diabetes. At one time, type 2 diabetes was more common in people over age 45. But now more young people, even children, have the disease because many are overweight or obese.

Knowing the health history of your siblings, parents, and blood relatives is important because it gives you and your health care team information about your risk for developing health problems, such as type 2 diabetes. You can't change your family history, but knowing about it can help you work with your health care team to take action on things you can change. Studies have shown that you can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes by losing 5 to 7 percent of your weight, if you are overweight—that's 10 to 14 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds. You can lose weight by walking 30 minutes a day for five days a week and choosing healthy foods lower in fat and calories.

The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP), which is jointly sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health, urges everyone to explore their family health history and make a family plan to prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.

1. Ask around. Talk to your relatives to find out if anyone has diabetes. If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, tell your family.

2. Update your health care team on your family history. Talk to your health care team about whether you should be screened for diabetes. It is important to find out early if you have diabetes so you can take steps to manage the disease. People who keep their blood glucose (sugar) as close to normal as possible in the early years after they are diagnosed with diabetes have fewer problems with their eyes, nerves, and kidneys, and fewer heart attacks later in life.
3. Make a healthy eating plan for the whole family. The plan should include:
   - Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products,
   - Choosing lean meats, poultry without the skin, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts, and
   - Foods low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.
4. Get Moving. Make physical activity a family affair. Go for a walk, or play soccer, basketball, or tag with your children. Try swimming, biking, hiking, jogging, or any activity that you enjoy. Vary your activities so you don't get bored.

Don't let diabetes be your family secret. Make a family plan to work together to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. If someone in your family has diabetes, ask how family members can support them.

Check out NDEP's free resources for more ideas on how to lower your risk for type 2 diabetes. Order the Small Steps. Big Rewards. Your GAME PLAN to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes booklet and other resources by calling 1-888-693-NDEP (6337) or visit ***www.YourDiabetesInfo.org.***

Want To Learn More?

OEA Choice Trust is the only organization dedicated to workplace wellness for all Oregon public school employees. We believe that no matter the role, all school employees should have the support they need to be physically, mentally and emotionally well. Healthy worksites reduce employees' stress, boost energy and morale, and promote better balance in life—a win for teachers, staff, administrators and students. We've partnered with schools all across the state, and we understand what works. We work with administrators, faculty and staff of Oregon's Public K-12 schools, education service districts and community colleges. We provide grants, information, gatherings and coaching, all focused on nurturing a culture of wellness.

www.OEAChoice.com

OEA Choice Trust

Inspiring schools to create healthy workplaces for all staff

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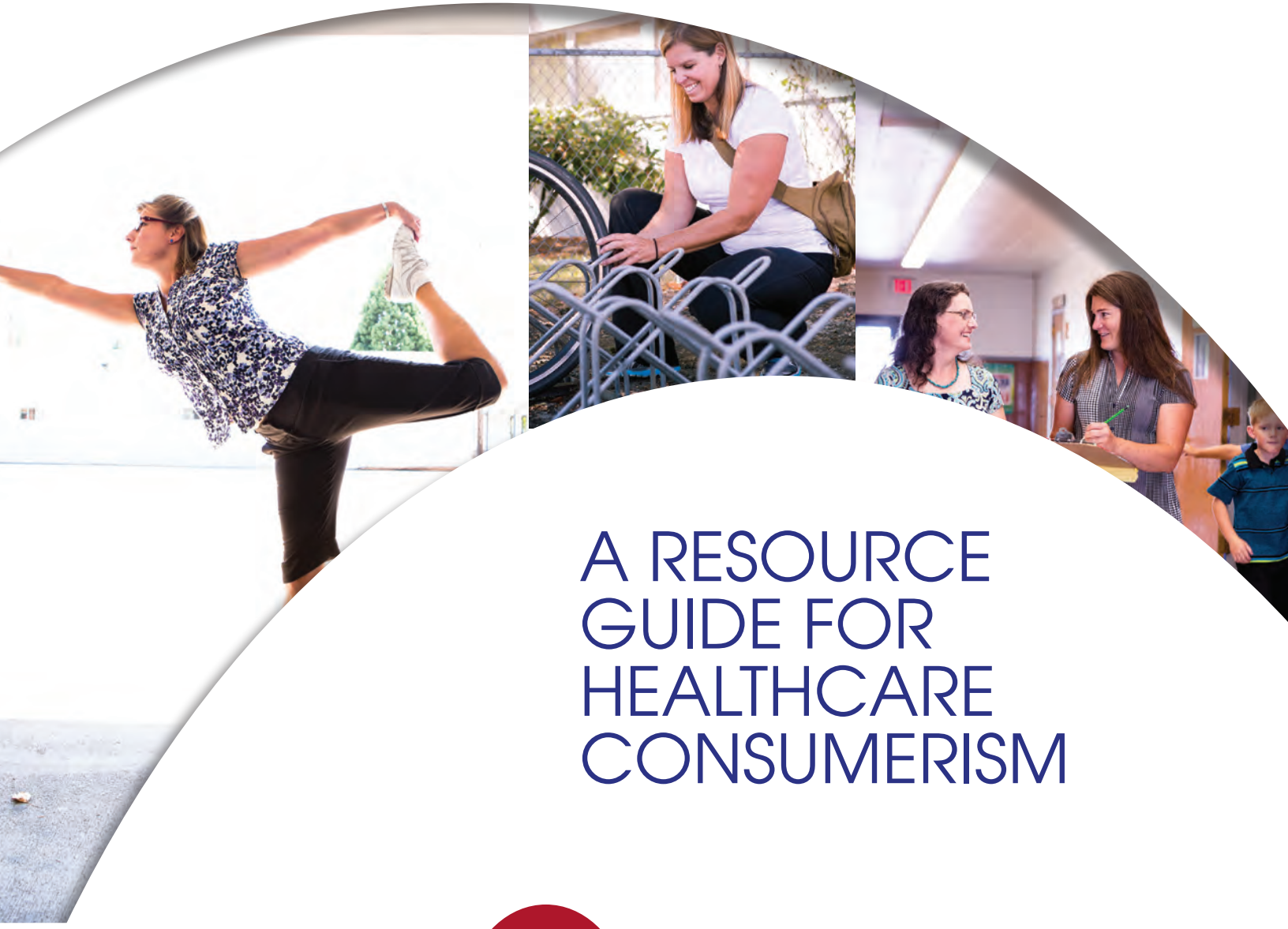

A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR HEALTHCARE CONSUMERISM

OEA Choice Trust

Inspiring schools to create healthy workplaces for all staff

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