Wellbeing Insights

Be Inspired to Move:

National Physical Fitness and Sports Month is the perfect time for children and families to get outside and play together! You don't have to do back flips in the Olympics or throw a football 40 yards down the field to be active and break a sweat. Whether you ride your bike to work or school, or chase after your dog in the park, physical activity can be fun and it helps you feel good too.

You've probably heard that today in America, one-third of all children and two- thirds of all adults are overweight or obese. Physical activity can help build lean muscle, reduce fat, and promote strong bone, muscle and joint development. So what are you waiting for?

This month's weather makes it easy to explore the great outdoors. As individuals, friends, parents, spouses, siblings, and grandparents, we can help those we care for develop physical activity habits that will last a lifetime. By acting as a role model and making fitness fun, you and your loved ones are more likely to make activity a habit.

Grab a family member or a friend—ride a bike, take a hike, visit a park, have a picnic. Getting closer to nature can help you get closer to those you love. Think back to your "good old days"; it's likely that you'll remember a moment when something got you hooked on nature, sparked your sense of wonder, and empowered you to explore, and move!

We all fondly remember the hours spent collecting rocks, splashing about in streams, building forts, or going on adventures with our friends, where our imagination could run wild. We returned home tired, dusty and feeling wonderful.

We're challenging everyone to pick up a new activity or sport, and motivate your loved ones and friends to enjoy moving! Whatever you do, do it together and inspire others!

Be Active Your Way – Go Outside and Play – Let's Move!

Eat Well!

Healthy Recipe Substitutions

The Baked Potato

The tater sometimes gets a bad rap. It is actually a potent hunger tamer. In a study that measured the -"fullness factor" of 38 foods, people ranked boiled potatoes highest, reporting that they felt satisfied and ate less after two hours of consuming them.

Potatoes are often shunned because they are considered high in carbohydrates. Yet, they are loaded with vitamins, fiber and nutrients—especially with the skin left on. Potatoes will provide steady energy and at only 160 calories a pop.

Unfortunately, many people have become accustomed to cooking or dressing up potatoes in an unhealthy way, such as greasy French fries or potato chips, or load baked potatoes with fats such as butter, sour cream, melted cheese, and bacon bits. Be good to your heart--bake or broil your potato, and enjoy a healthful low calorie, high fiber food that offers significant protection against cardiovascular disease and cancer.

1. Use **mashed ripe bananas** instead of butter, margarine, or shortening when baking because the consistency is ideal, and bananas add nutrients such as potassium, fiber and vitamin B6.

2. Use **mashed turnips** instead of potatoes with butter and milk because one cup of mashed turnips does not require butter or milk for a creamy consistency and has only 50 calories.

3. Use **mashed avocado** instead of mayonnaise because a two tablespoon serving of mayo has 200 calories and 24 grams of fat; an avocado contains less than half the fat (its healthy fat!), has 115 calories, and provides vitamin E.

4. Use **pureed or fresh fruit** instead of syrup because pureed fruit has less sugar and more antioxidants and vitamins.

Chili Cheese Potatoes

4 russet potatoes, pricked with a fork
2 T. olive oil
1 t. chili powder
1 15 oz. can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1 cup shredded cheddar
1 14.5 oz. can diced tomatoes, drained
Salt
1/2 small onion, chopped
1 clove garlic minced
2 scallions, chopped

- Microwave potatoes rubbed with olive oil and sprinkled with salt for 6 minutes, turn and microwave for 4 minutes more
- Put potatoes onto baking sheet, bake for 20 minutes until skin is crisp
- Warm remaining oil and sauté onion until softened about 3 minutes, add garlic and chili powder, stirring for 1 minute
- Add beans and tomatoes, cook until heated through, season with salt and pepper

The Healing Power of Sleep

Wellbeing!

Sleep, new research reveals, is a master regulator of health. A sleep deficit or disruption can create wide-ranging havoc, including compromising our immune system, causing inflammation, and damaging our genes. Losing just an hour of sleep a night increases risk of cancer, heart attack, stroke and type 2 diabetes.

Lack of sleep can also lead to memory loss, negatively affect people's reflexes and decision-making skills, cause hearing loss, psychiatric disease, and impede sexual function.

And, it's not just people who suffer from sleep disorders, like insomnia and sleep apnea, who have to worry, says James Maas, PhD, a recently retired Cornell scientist and one of the world's foremost sleep researchers. He says at least seven out of ten Americans aren't getting enough sleep and they're at risk for serious health problems.

"People devalue sleep and are completely unaware of what happens to them when they have a deficit," Maas says. "As a society we are so habituated to low levels of sleep that most of us don't know what it feels like to be fully alert and awake."

We treat sleep like a "tradable commodity," sacrificing it for work, entertainment or some other lifestyle choice. In large part, we do this because it can take months or even years for a disease caused by sleep deficit to fully emerge.

In the meantime, our health, relationships, sense of wonder and more can be diminished. Sleep is the food of the brain and a great many of us are hungry (or starving!) for sleep.

This raises a question that sleep scientists like Maas hear all the time:

How much sleep does the average person need to function optimally, or even competently? Can some people really get by on, say, four hours of sleep a night or will chronic sleep deprivation ultimately catch up with everyone?

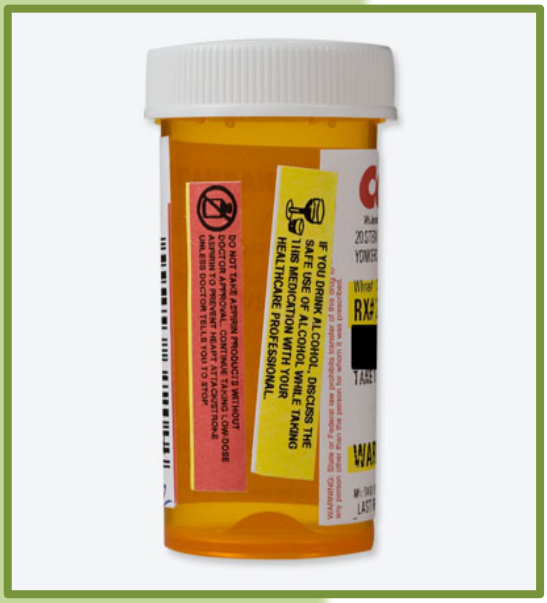
While most people do well with seven and a half to eight hours, there are individuals who need less — or substantially more. "Some people find they need ten hours," says Maas, and they can no more change that than they can change a size 9 shoe to a size 6. Women, especially, often need more sleep because of fluctuations in hormones, including testosterone, cortisol and melatonin during menstruation and pregnancy, and at the start of menopause.

To figure out how much sleep you need, find out what time you need to bed down to wake up in the morning without any grogginess or even an alarm. Each week go to bed fifteen minutes earlier until you find how many hours you really need. Get most of your rest in a single stretch, and not in chunks. Fragmented nights compromise energy and cognition and lead to daytime exhaustion. If you do lose time on any given night, make up for it as soon as possible. Catch up by going to bed earlier, not sleeping in later. And make up the sleep over a number of successive days, not all at once.

"Even a soul submerged in sleep is hard at work and helps make something of the world." - Heraclitus

Benefit Yourself!

Sure, your pill bottle label says to avoid alcohol, but come on, who hasn't had a glass of wine while taking antibiotics? News flash: Blowing off those warnings and instructions can put your health at serious risk. Here are some of the most important directions to follow—and why.



Alcohol—Throwing back a few while using the pain reliever or acetaminophen (also found in many cough, cold and flu medications) can put extra strain on your liver and could lead to lasting damage. Drinking while on antibiotics might cause nausea, and if you're already on a drug that makes you woozy, you might feel even dizzier.

Sunlight—if you're on certain antibiotics or diabetes medication, just 10 unprotected minutes outdoors could cause burns.

Food—Drugs such as ibuprofen and naproxen might irritate the stomach lining unless taken with food, which acts as a sort of protective cushion. Some pills require a little fat from food to be effectively absorbed by the bloodstream. On the other hand, some antibiotics aren't as potent as they need to be if your stomach is full.

Grapefruit– A compound in this fruit affects how your body processes many medications, so you can end up with too little or too much in your blood

Dosage– Even a basic, like acetaminophen, which is generally very safe, can be harmful if you take just a little more than you should.

Take Our Quiz:
Secrets to Avoiding Motion Sickness in the Car

True or False?

1. Lean your head back against the seat headrest.
2. Look at the scenery in front of you, not in the distance.
3. Get enough sleep before traveling.
4. Eat a lot of acidic or greasy foods before traveling.
5. Don't try and read in a moving vehicle.

Answers: 1.True; 2.False; 3.True; 4.False; 5.True