



# WELLBEING



## Insights

April 2015

Living a Better, More Vibrant Life

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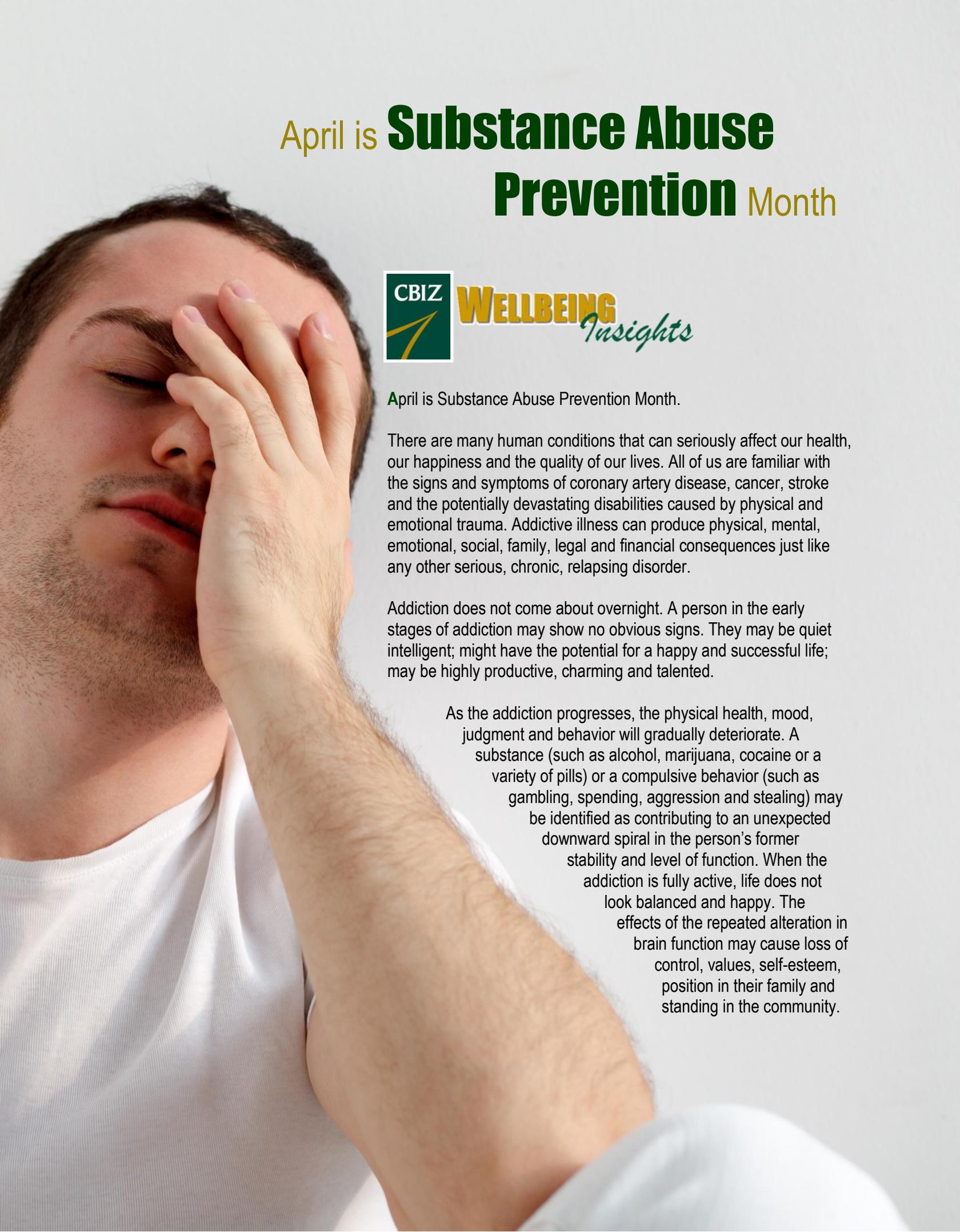
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April is **Substance Abuse Prevention** Month



# April is **Substance Abuse** **Prevention** Month



April is Substance Abuse Prevention Month.

There are many human conditions that can seriously affect our health, our happiness and the quality of our lives. All of us are familiar with the signs and symptoms of coronary artery disease, cancer, stroke and the potentially devastating disabilities caused by physical and emotional trauma. Addictive illness can produce physical, mental, emotional, social, family, legal and financial consequences just like any other serious, chronic, relapsing disorder.

Addiction does not come about overnight. A person in the early stages of addiction may show no obvious signs. They may be quiet intelligent; might have the potential for a happy and successful life; may be highly productive, charming and talented.

As the addiction progresses, the physical health, mood, judgment and behavior will gradually deteriorate. A substance (such as alcohol, marijuana, cocaine or a variety of pills) or a compulsive behavior (such as gambling, spending, aggression and stealing) may be identified as contributing to an unexpected downward spiral in the person's former stability and level of function. When the addiction is fully active, life does not look balanced and happy. The effects of the repeated alteration in brain function may cause loss of control, values, self-esteem, position in their family and standing in the community.

Life through the eyes of the addicted person can be dark, depressed, tense, anxious and afraid. The organ system with which healthy decisions are made is impaired, and the person may feel helpless to recover on their own.

There is hope for the person's recovery if the signs and symptoms of addiction are recognized and professional help in concert with family support is sought.

### **TIPS** for Substance Abuse Prevention

- Do not be afraid to say NO
- Connect with family and friends
- Avoid peer pressure
- Enjoy life and do what you love without alcohol and drugs
- Get educated about the effects of drug and alcohol abuse
- Be a role model and set a positive example
- Plan ahead: Drink alcohol in moderation and designate a sober driver
- Speak out, speak up and take control: Take responsibility for your life, your health and your safety
- Get help

Contributed by:  sharecare



If you or someone you know needs immediate help, please contact one of the following crisis hotlines:

### **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Hotline**

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

### **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:**

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

(1-888-628-9454 for Spanish speaking callers)

### **Youth Mental Health Line:**

1-888-568-1112

### **Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administrator (SAMHSA) Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator**

<http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

**Get Help for  
Substance Abuse  
1-800-622-HELP (4357)**

# *Surprising* Headache Triggers



Anything that boosts your stress level can make you more likely to get tension headaches or migraines. The exact way stress leads to headaches is not clear. The nerves in your brain that relay pain may become more sensitive when you are stressed. Below are many different triggers to headaches:

- Changes within the brain itself may be involved in migraine headaches.
- When the weather changes, so does your chance of getting a migraine. Whether it is a heat wave or a cold snap, the change can trigger a headache in some people. Sunny, hot days and high humidity are other common culprits. Rain, wind or changes in barometric pressure may also lead to headaches. While you cannot change the weather, you can wear sunglasses on a bright day, stay well hydrated and avoid midday sun.
- Powerful smells — even nice ones — can set off migraines for many people. It is not clear why this happens, but the odors may stir up your nervous system. The most common triggers are paint, perfume and certain types of flowers.
- How you wear your hair can take a toll on your head. A tight ponytail may strain the tissue in your scalp, leading to a hairdo headache. Headbands, braids and tight-fitting hats can have the same effect. If this is the cause of your headache, letting your hair down usually brings fast relief.
- Strenuous exercise, including jogging and intimate activity, can sometimes lead to headaches. These types of headaches are most common in people who get migraines. Talk to your doctor if you do get headaches after activity to make sure there is not a more serious cause.
- You do not have to work up a sweat to build pressure in your head and neck muscles. Slouching at your desk will do the job, too. You can improve your posture by making changes in your workspace. Use a chair with lower-back support. Make sure your computer monitor is not too low or too high. Do not hunch your shoulders, and never cradle the phone between your ear and shoulder.
- A migraine trigger for some people is aged cheese, including blue cheese, cheddar, parmesan and Swiss. The cause may be a substance called

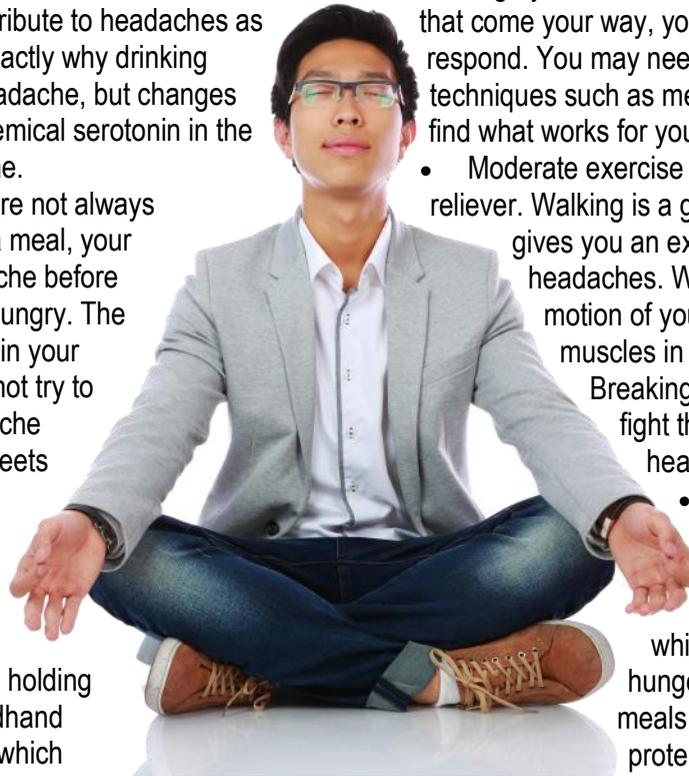


SMELLS *WORK*  
 SMOKING  
 CAFFEINE *HUNGER*  
 HEAT FOOD  
*EXERCISE*

tyramine. The longer a food ages, the more tyramine it has. Tyramine, flavonoids and other ingredients in red wine and other alcoholic

drinks may contribute to headaches as well. It is not clear exactly why drinking alcohol triggers a headache, but changes in the level of the chemical serotonin in the brain may be to blame.

- Hunger headaches are not always obvious. If you skip a meal, your head could start to ache before you realize you are hungry. The trouble is likely a dip in your blood sugar. But do not try to cure a hunger headache with a candy bar. Sweets cause blood sugar to spike and then drop even lower.
- Smoking can lead to a headache — and not just in the person holding the cigarette. Secondhand smoke has nicotine, which causes blood vessels in your brain to narrow. Give up cigarettes or try to avoid secondhand smoke. This may be especially helpful if you get cluster headaches. These are extremely painful one-sided headaches that can also cause eye and nose symptoms.
- Caffeine is both good and bad. In moderation, it may help treat some headaches. It is found in many headache medications. But, chain-chugging coffee can sometimes cause the pain. Also, if you are hooked on caffeine, cutting back abruptly may only make things worse. Caffeine withdrawal is another headache trigger.



A headache diary is the best way to do this. Keep a daily log of foods you eat, stressful events, weather changes and physical activity. Whenever you have a headache, record the time it starts and stops. This will help you find patterns, so you can try to avoid your triggers.

- Many people manage migraines or tension headaches through stress-busting strategies. Although you cannot control the stressful events that come your way, you can change the way you respond. You may need to experiment with techniques such as meditation and massage to find what works for you.
- Moderate exercise is a powerful stress reliever. Walking is a great choice, because it gives you an extra defense against tension headaches. When you walk, the swinging motion of your arms tends to relax the muscles in your neck and shoulders. Breaking up those knots may help fight the cause of some headaches.
- Eat balanced meals throughout the day. That will help keep your blood sugar on an even keel, which can put an end to hunger headaches. Aim for meals and snacks that pair a protein with a complex carbohydrate, such as peanut butter on whole-grain bread or chicken breast with brown rice. Drink enough fluids, too. Dehydration is another common headache trigger.
- Physical therapy combines exercise and education to reduce pain and improve range of motion. If you get tension headaches, physical therapy may help relax your neck muscles and teach you to form new habits that lead to better posture.
- Over-the-counter pain relievers can help against many types of headaches. But, avoid taking these drugs continuously, because it can lead to medication overuse headaches or rebound headaches. The pain from this type of headache returns as soon as the pills have worn off.

**Recommended Headache Solutions:**

If you can figure out your most common triggers, you may be able to cut off headaches before they begin.

For frequent or severe headaches, consult your doctor.



# When You are the *Adult Child* of an Alcoholic Parent

Contributed by: United HealthCare

You may not drink, but that does not mean you are not affected by alcoholism. If you are the adult child of an alcoholic parent, learn how to cope with the effect alcoholism has had on your life.

When a parent abuses alcohol, the whole family suffers. Children are especially at risk. Growing up in an alcoholic home can seriously interfere with the normal stages of childhood. Later, adult children of alcoholic parents often have problems with trust, control and fear of intimacy.

## **Growing up in a disruptive home**

Alcohol abuse interferes with a parent's ability to provide a loving and structured home life for children. The home is usually filled with chaos and sometimes violence and/or incest. The parent often breaks promises. Discipline is not consistent. Mood swings and personality changes in the parent are common. Finances may suffer.

All of this can cause tremendous confusion and fear in a child. There is usually anger and resentment toward the parent who is not being responsible or reliable. Family roles are unclear and older children may have to take on the adult duty of caring for younger siblings. As teens, many are mature beyond their years, the result of having to grow up too fast in an alcoholic home.

Children of alcoholics also carry the burden of worrying about their parents. Often, they are embarrassed by a parent's behavior. They may work hard to cover for the parent or lie to protect him or her. This creates uncomfortable family secrets, inside and outside of the home.



### Problems that arise in adulthood

Being raised in a household with an alcoholic parent can have a lasting influence that manifests differently for everyone. Adult children of alcoholics may lack certain coping skills and have trouble forming healthy relationships. Some become perfectionists or overachievers to compensate for low self-esteem. Some mistakenly believe that they were the cause of a parent's drinking. Other common traits in adulthood include:

- Problems with trust
- Difficulty expressing feelings and needs
- Fear of intimacy
- A need to control
- Feelings of isolation and aloneness
- Constant seeking of approval and affirmation
- Being extremely responsible or irresponsible
- Impulsivity
- Substance abuse

### Getting help

People who have grown up in an alcoholic home may have a lifetime of problems unless they learn ways to move beyond the stresses of their childhood. For most, the first step toward healing is learning more about the disease of alcoholism and how it has affected them. By gaining insight into the past, they can better understand why they behave in certain ways.

If you are a child of an alcoholic, it is important to recognize that healing often involves talking about what you went through and how you feel about it now.

There are many paths for getting help:

- **Individual therapy.** Meet with a reputable therapist who has experience with family issues relating to addiction and recovery.
- **Group support.** Seek out local Al-Anon and/or Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) meetings.
- **Self-education:**
  - **Books.** Check with your local library for books about overcoming a chaotic childhood.
  - **Parent courses.** If you have children, learn about child development. Seek out and take part in a parent education course to learn skills for relating to your children.

If you are comfortable, share your decision to seek help with close friends and family who can support you. You may find that you are not alone in your pain.

The first part of your life may have been affected by family alcoholism. The rest of your life does not have to be.



Fresh Homemade

# Raspberry Sorbet

This refreshing low calorie dessert will leave you feeling guilt free. Raspberries are an excellent source of vitamin C. Vitamin C helps the human body develop resistance against infectious agents, counter inflammation and scavenge harmful free radicals.

## Ingredients

- 4 cups whole, frozen raspberries
- 2-3 tablespoons filtered water
- Up to 1/4 cup raw honey (optional)

## Preparation

1. Allow your frozen whole raspberries to thaw for about fifteen to twenty minutes.
2. After about twenty minutes, combine raspberry, filtered water and honey (if you are using it) in a food processor.
3. Pulse repeatedly to break up the berries, then process until the sorbet is smooth.
4. Serve immediately, or, if the raspberry sorbet is too soft, pour it into a container and freeze it for a few hours — stirring periodically to break up any ice crystals that may form.

## Nutrition Facts

Makes: 3 Servings

Calories	83
Carbohydrates	18.5 g
Dietary Fiber	10.1 g
Fat	0.9 g
Sodium	2 mg
Protein	3 g



# Superfood *of the Month* *Guava*

This spring fruit is a healthy way to satisfy your sweet tooth. A guava is roughly the size of a medium apple and contains only 35 calories.

## Health Benefits of Eating Guava

Guava is one of the richest fruit-based sources of vitamin C, with each fruit providing 209 percent of the recommended daily amount — beating out even oranges. These sweet and tangy fruits also contain healthy doses of vitamin A, copper, manganese and folate (essential for producing new cells and keeping them healthy). Guava even contains more potassium than an equal serving of bananas. And guavas get an A+ in fill-up factor, since they are made up of 50 percent dietary fiber. One study suggested that out of all fruits, guava contains the most antioxidants, which can help prevent the development of chronic diseases.

When trolling the grocery store aisles, select a guava fruit that is firm but gives to gentle pressure (much like a ripe pear), and store in the fridge for up to one week (we bet it will not last one day).

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1

Calories	35
Total Fat	0 g
Sodium	1 mg
Fiber	1 g
Total Carbs	9 g
Protein	1 g
Sugars	7 g



# Exercise of the Month



## Chair Dips

**Type:** Strength  
**Main Muscle Worked:** Triceps  
**Equipment:** Chair or Bench

1

To begin this exercise, sit on the very edge of a chair or bench. Place your hands on the edge of the bench as well, right by your hips; fingers facing forward and arms close to the body. Legs should be bent with feet flat on the floor.



2

Using your arms to support your weight, scoot your buttocks just off the edge of your seat. Slowly lower your body as you inhale by bending at the elbows until there is an angle slightly smaller than 90 degrees between the upper arm and the forearm.



**Tip:** Keep the elbows as close as possible throughout the movement. Forearms should always be pointing down.

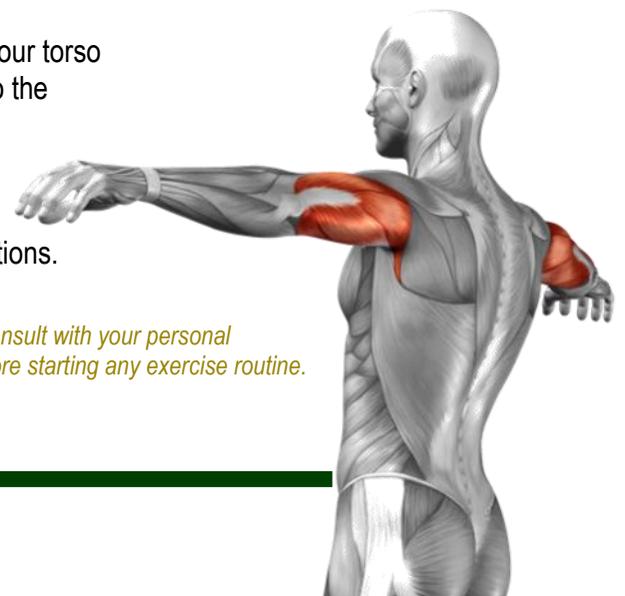
3

Using your triceps to bring your torso up again, lift yourself back to the starting position.

4

Repeat for 3 sets of 4 repetitions.

*You should consult with your personal physician before starting any exercise routine.*



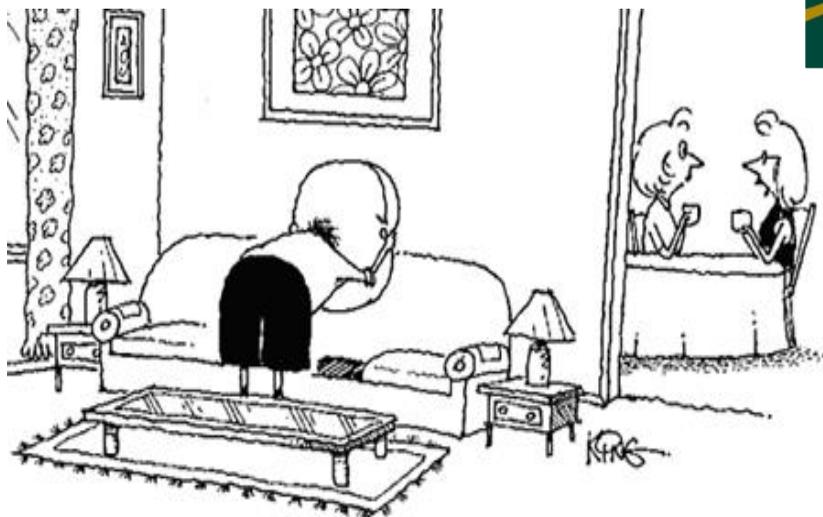
*Eat This...*

**Not That...**



**Almonds for Croutons in Salads**

Every salad needs that extra crunch. But rather than getting the extra carbs (and often fat and sodium) that come with croutons, try some lightly toasted slivered almonds, pecans or walnuts.



The doctor said he needed more activity. So I hide his T.V. remote three times a week.



**WELLBEING**  
*Insights*

**We would like your feedback and personal stories to use and feature in future publications.**

**Your Personal Wellness Story:**

If you have a personal health or wellness story that you think would inspire others, please feel free to send a brief letter and your picture to our editor.

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Thank you for reading and contributing. We sincerely hope that we can become a healthier part of becoming a healthier you.



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