



HEALTH REPORT

FALL 2011



Better Breathing

How to prevent COPD and ease symptoms of this chronic lung disease.

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a collection of lung diseases that restrict your ability to breathe well. Your parents may have called the condition “smoker’s cough.” Smoking is the leading cause of COPD, but it isn’t the only thing that causes the disease.

PREVENT COPD

First, if you smoke, stop now. Speak with your doctor about products and programs that can help you stop smoking successfully—which will greatly reduce your risk of developing COPD. Your state, your local hospital and/or your benefit plan may offer a free or low-cost smoking cessation program that can help you.

If you don’t smoke, be aware of your surroundings so you can avoid air particles that contribute to COPD. These

irritants include secondhand smoke from smokers around you, dust, air pollution and chemical fumes.

CONTROL THE SYMPTOMS

There is no way to cure COPD, but you can slow its progress and control your symptoms. To begin, avoid things that irritate your lungs and, if you do smoke, quit now.

Work with your doctor to create a treatment plan. Then, be sure to follow the doctor’s instructions. You might need to take medication or exercise more regularly. You may need a flu shot each year, and a pneumonia vaccine to protect your lungs from these illnesses. And, your doctor will explain what to do if your symptoms get worse.

Taking simple steps to improve your life, and following the doctor’s instructions, will help you live well with COPD.

GERM-FREE IS THE WAY TO BE

Cold and flu season is almost here. To keep yourself and your family germ-free this year, start by following these three simple tips.

WASH UP. After you touch your face, before and after you touch food, after you use the restroom ... those are just some of the times you should be sure to wash your hands with warm water and plenty of soap. Scrub well under your fingernails and all the way over your wrists (for as long as it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” through twice).

SANITIZE YOUR HANDS. When you can’t get to a sink, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Squeeze a dime-sized amount of the gel into your hand and rub it into your palms, the backs of your hands and under your nails until your hands are dry. Help your children use the sanitizer to clean their hands, too.

STAY HOME. Germs spread quickly in workplaces, schools and public spaces. It’s wise to stay home from work if you can—and put off errands, community activities and other public gatherings—when you’re sick. Getting rest helps you recover faster, and you won’t spread germs to more people.



Take a Break: It's Good for You

If you haven't used up all of your vacation time this year, you're not alone. About 35 percent of Americans don't use all their time off, according to www.expedia.com and Harris Interactive. But you might be missing out on the health benefits of a little time away.

A study published in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal* showed that depression and stress increased among workers who took vacations less than twice a year. Plus, workers who took vacations less than once every five years were more likely to sleep fewer than eight hours a night, more likely to report feeling tired or exhausted, and more likely to say that their home life/work life balance was off.

Take the 'STRESS' Out of This Test

Here's what you can expect from this heart exercise test.

Your doctor's ordered a stress test for you, and now you're a little concerned. But you don't have to be. A stress test helps your doctor determine how well your heart is working.

Who Needs a Stress Test?

Your doctor might send you for a stress test if he or she is trying to:

- Clarify or confirm a questionable result on a routine EKG.
- Diagnose coronary artery disease or follow up on treatment.
- Diagnose the cause of chest pain, shortness of breath or lightheadedness.
- Determine whether you are at risk for a heart attack.

What Happens During the Test?

During a stress test, a doctor measures how hard your heart works.

Here's what you can expect:

- You'll be hooked up to machines that monitor your heart rate, breathing, blood pressure and cardiac function.
- You'll walk slowly on a treadmill; the speed and incline will gradually increase.
- Finally, the doctor might have you sit or lie down while he or she checks your heart rate and blood pressure.

After the Test

Your doctor may be able to get all of the information he or she needs from this test. Or, you may need more specialized tests to diagnose your condition or find the best treatment for you.

TO LEARN MORE For an exercise stress test illustration and resources on heart disease, visit www.heart.org.



No Bones About It

You may have heard that women's bones get weaker as they age. But did you know that men's bones do the same thing? About 12 million men are at risk of developing osteoporosis, a severe thinning of the bones that can lead to fractures and breaks.

There are ways you can prevent this condition. As with many other health conditions, eating properly and exercising are critical to your success.

Make sure you're getting enough calcium and vitamin D. You can get the recommended daily allowance of calcium, about 1,000 milligrams, from low-fat dairy products or from supplements. Most people need to take a supplement to get the recommended 400 to 800 international units of vitamin D.

To build bone mass, you need to work out. As little as 30 minutes of moderate physical activity—like a brisk walk—at least five days a week can do the trick. Add weightlifting twice a week to boost your bone mass even further.





3 Ways Pets Help Your Health

Find out how furry friends enrich our lives.

What could bring together doctors and veterinarians? This news might: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the National Institutes of Health all agree that owning a pet offers health benefits. Here are some ways your pet may be keeping you fit.

- 1 Pets decrease your blood pressure, cholesterol and triglyceride levels.** Studies show that most health conditions worsened by stress are somewhat relieved by owning a pet. The presence of a compassionate companion relaxes people—and encourages them to get fit.
- 2 Pets increase your opportunities to get outside and exercise.** Dogs, in particular, are excellent workout buddies. Their need for routine exercise propels owners to get moving. Even volunteering to walk shelter dogs on a regular basis has been shown to lead to weight loss and improved mood.
- 3 Pets increase opportunities to meet other people and reduce feelings of loneliness.** Most people, according to the AVMA, consider their pets to be companions, not property. And that makes for a strong bond that reduces the sense of loneliness felt by many adults. Of course, taking the dog out for a regular walk can also become a social event—you'll meet neighbors and other pet owners, too.

STUDY: More Fiber Lowers Some Cancer Risk

Recently, scientists from Imperial College London reported that there is “convincing evidence” that foods containing dietary fiber protect against colorectal cancer—and that diets containing red or processed meat increase the likelihood of developing the disease. So, how can you stay within the healthy limits?

FIBER: Adding plant foods to your diet can help you take in more fiber. Beans, whole grains, fruits, vegetables and nuts are good sources of dietary fiber. The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that you eat 14 grams of dietary fiber for every 1,000 calories you eat. That means that someone on a fairly average 2,000-calorie diet every day should take in about 28 grams of fiber each day.

RED MEAT: Research suggests that adults should eat no more than 2.5 ounces of red or processed meat daily. That's about three strips of bacon. Practically speaking, that means eating no more than four quarter-pound hamburgers, two 8-ounce steaks or four 4-ounce pork chops each week.

Do You Need an ANTIBIOTIC?

Coughs and sore throats crop up when the weather starts to turn cooler. Your first idea may be to ask your doctor for an antibiotic, but these wonder drugs aren't the cure for every illness.

In fact, antibiotics only fight illnesses caused by bacteria. Those include strep throat and some ear infections. But antibiotics don't fight viruses, which cause colds, the flu and most coughs and sore throats. Taking antibiotics when you don't have a bacterial infection can make you resistant to

them—so they won't work the next time you really do need them. Also, if your doctor prescribes an antibiotic for you, be sure to take it exactly as directed.

One more reminder: It can be hard to watch your child suffer through a cold or sore throat—but don't pressure the doctor to give your child an antibiotic. The doctor will prescribe one, if needed. Otherwise, your doctor will offer other treatment suggestions for your little one.



Apple Fennel Soup

100
CALORIES

1g
TOTAL FAT

80mg
SODIUM

Ingredients:

- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 2 Golden Delicious apples, peeled, cored and chopped
- 1 cup thinly sliced carrots
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 1 cup chopped fennel
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/4 tsp. dried thyme leaves
- 6 peppercorns
- 4 tsp. non-fat plain yogurt

Instructions:

In a large pot, combine broth, water, wine, apples, carrots, onion, fennel, bay leaf, thyme and peppercorns; bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, 20 minutes. Strain soup, reserving liquid. Remove bay leaf from apple-vegetable mixture in strainer. In blender or food processor, puree mixture; add reserved liquid and blend well. Reheat soup, if needed. Serve in soup bowls with a spoonful of yogurt.

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Servings: 4

Get more recipes at www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

Harvest Time

Bring these fall treats to your table.

Fall brings a crop of healthy—and tasty—foods to prepare. Apples have fiber to keep you feeling full and carbohydrates that provide long-lasting, steady energy. Researchers at Cornell University and the Mayo Clinic have also linked apples to a reduced risk of some kinds of cancer.

Cranberries protect your body from some bacterial infections. And researchers have shown that cranberries may guard against cancer, cardiovascular disease and liver problems. Even pumpkins, which aren't technically fruits, get in on the act. The beta carotene they contain helps you age better.

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