



Patoka Valley
Health Care Cooperative
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A MONTHLY HEALTHLETTER FROM THE WELLNESS COUNCIL OF AMERICA

Stress Much, Live Less?

A good amount of research has shown that stress can indeed suck the life and vitality out of you. Studies have shown that stress caused by things like untreated depression, social isolation and anxiety attacks can accelerate the aging process. In one recent study published in *Molecular Psychology*, scientists found an association between major depressive disorders and accelerated cellular aging.

The researchers discovered that people with clinical depression had shorter telomeres than their healthy peers. Telomeres are strands of protective DNA that cap the tips of chromosomes within a cell. Shorter telomeres mean chromosomes begin to unravel. The result? Aging at the cellular level.

BOTTOM LINE: Address your stress—as it could literally be a life saver. If you think you may be depressed (if you’ve been feeling down consistently for more than a few weeks) seek professional medical care for diagnosis and treatment. Depression is a common condition that can be successfully treated.

The 5 Secrets of Healthy Aging

A fountain of youth or a magical potion to turn back the hands of time would be nice—but unfortunately such things only exist in science fiction. Indeed, real science tells us that it’s our everyday habits that help protect our youth and extend our lifespan.

To be sure, in a 35-year landmark study, 2,500 men were asked to follow five simple rules: eat well, work out, drink less, keep their weight down and never smoke. In the 35 year study only 25 participants managed to stick to the plan. The researchers found that the 25 men have dramatically cut their risk of cancer, diabetes, heart-attack, stroke and dementia. In fact, the development of heart disease was delayed by up to 12 years, and the study showed that healthy living (as done by the 25 men who followed the plan) can reduce the chances of dementia by up to 60 percent.

Start your healthy aging plan today:

Eat well: When it comes to healthy aging, the Mediterranean diet is an excellent choice. This way of eating focuses on plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains and healthy fats. The Mediterranean diet has been linked to better heart health and greater longevity.



Make it a habit: Make sure there’s at least one fruit or veggie on your plate at every meal.

Move: Physical activity cannot only help you live longer, but it also provides instant health benefits like improved mood and sleep. What kind of fitness is best? Anything that gets your heart rate up and is something that you enjoy.



Make it a habit: Aim for 30 minutes of daily activity—do something you enjoy like a walk in nature or a bike ride.

Drink in moderation and don’t smoke: Drinking moderately means no more than one alcoholic drink a day for women and no more than two for men. When it comes to smoking, make every effort to quit, as it’s one of the worst things you can do for your health.



Make it a habit: Commit to quitting tobacco and don’t get discouraged if you fail a few times. Some research shows that it takes an average of seven attempts to ditch the tobacco habit for good.



The vivid, yet opposing colors and flavors in this salad are simply sublime. It is easy to prepare and pairs beautifully with fresh sweet corn on the cob and sliced tomatoes.

SALAD INGREDIENTS

1 rotisserie chicken, meat pulled and shredded

1 cup of chopped purple cabbage

1 red bell pepper, diced

3 carrots, shredded

1 peeled and seeded cucumber, diced

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

DRESSING

Juice and zest of 1 lemon

Juice and zest of 1 orange

2 Tbsp of light soy sauce

2 Tbsp of seasoned rice vinegar

2 ½ tsp of chili oil

¼ cup of canola oil

1 ½ tsp chili pepper flakes

Salt to taste

DIRECTIONS:

Remove chicken from the bone and shred. In a big salad bowl, combine chicken with cabbage, bell pepper, carrots, cucumber and cilantro. In a separate bowl, combine all ingredients for the dressing and whisk together until blended. Pour dressing over chicken and vegetables and toss well.

Serves about 6-8



Dr. Ann
Ann Kulze, M.D.

With formal training in nutrition and medicine, plus hands-on experience as a mother of four and family physician, Dr. Ann is a unique nutrition expert for the real world.

The whole food ingredients found in Dr. Ann's recipes are the right foods for health and vitality. Nutritional excellence naturally follows.

For more, visit DrAnnWellness.com.



Asian
Chicken Salad



Good for Your Gut!

A Look at Fermented Foods

Fermented foods have been around for ages, but it's only been until recently that they've gained so much attention for their possible health benefits. Fermentation is the chemical breakdown of a substance by bacteria, yeasts or other microorganisms. Fermentation occurs when juice turns into wine, milk into yogurt and cabbage into sauerkraut (just to name a few).

What are the health benefits?

Fermented foods can aid in digestion and help you maintain a healthy immune system. Think of fermented foods as partially digested food. The bacteria that helps to make yogurt, for example, breaks down (or partially digests) specific food components, making it easier for you to digest. For example, those who can't digest the lactose in milk may be able to eat and easily digest yogurt because the lactose has been partially broken down in the fermentation process.

And because fermented foods help you digest foods more easily, your body can better absorb the essential nutrients it needs. No doubt about it, when your digestion system is working efficiently and absorbing all the nutrients it needs, your immune system stands a much better chance to fight off sickness and disease.

How much do you need?

You don't need to eat your weight in fermented foods to reap their health benefits. A yogurt a day or a spoonful of sauerkraut on a sandwich can do the trick.

Here's how you can incorporate fermented foods into your diet:

- * Make a smoothie with kefir or yogurt (choose the plain varieties that contain live cultures).
- * Opt for a slice of fresh sourdough for your sandwich.
- * Enjoy a cup of miso soup or use it to marinate fish or chicken.
- * Try tempeh as your protein at a meal (it's comparable to tofu).
- * Have some fermented vegetables as a side dish. Options include fermented cucumbers, beets, onions, sauerkraut and kimchi.

A word of warning: many fermented foods are high in sodium and/or sugars. Opt for low-sodium products if available and remember that you usually only need a small daily portion of fermented foods to gain the health benefits.

SAVVY SHOPPING

Keep these tips in mind while shopping for fermented foods:

Look in the refrigerated section.

Fermented foods are full of live organisms that must be refrigerated—so look for fermented foods in this section instead of choosing the cans on the shelf.

Look for it on the label. If a food is fermented it will usually be on the label somewhere. If you don't see it, chances are it's not fermented.

Avoid the term "pasteurized".

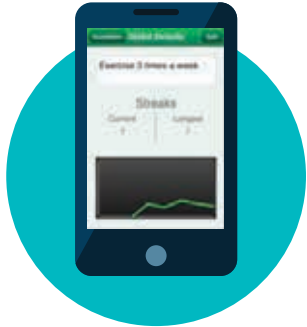
If you're looking to gain the benefits of fermentation, you do not want a pasteurized food because the pasteurization process wipes out the live, healthy cultures your gut needs.

Superstar Food of the Month: Greek-Style Yogurt



Low-fat, plain yogurt is an exceptional food when it comes to nutrition and health, and Greek-style takes both health and taste to a whole new level. Greek-style yogurt is strained to remove its liquid component, giving it a rich and creamy texture that is truly decadent while doubling its protein and lowering its sugar (lactose) content. A plain, standard 5.3 ounce serving has zero fat, 15 grams of protein and only 100 calories.

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Make it App-en!

Check out [EasyHabits](#), an app that allows you to easily change and track your habits.



1 Recognize why you engage in the bad habit. You may not realize when or why you bite your nails or eat too much. So, make a conscious effort to identify exactly when you do it and under what circumstances. The more aware you can become of your habit, the more power you have to change it.

2 Go public with your vow to quit. Tell your friends and family your intentions—it will help make it real, and it will also help you stay accountable.

3 Identify your triggers. Keep a log of what makes you engage in the bad habit. Do you do it when you're bored, upset, angry or around certain people?

4 Modify your environment. Research shows that your environment can prompt you to perform certain behaviors. So, change your scenery to make your bad habit less tempting. For example, if you want to cut down on drinking, throw out or hide alcohol that is in plain sight and easy for you to access.

5 Replace your bad habit with a new, healthy habit. You'll need a distraction to keep your mind off your habit. Things like exercise, talking with friends or starting a new home project are all healthy behaviors that will keep you busy.

6 Try to only change one bad habit at a time. Breaking a bad habit takes time and persistence. If you're trying to do too many things at once you may get overwhelmed. Work on completely eliminating one bad habit before you move on to the next.

7 Write all the benefits of quitting your bad habit. You probably know the cons of your habit, but you probably aren't aware of *all* the benefits of quitting. Does breaking your habit allow you to do new things or spend more time with the people who mean the most to you? Write down all the benefits to spark extra motivation.

8 Limit your interactions with people who encourage your bad habit. Always go to happy hour with the same coworkers? Try ducking out of work just a few minutes early so you're not tempted. And be honest with them too—if they're truly your friends they'll understand.

10 Ways to Break a BAD HABIT

Remember to talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

9 Defer to your replacement habit as much as possible. You must teach your brain not to crave your old behavior—so engage in your healthy replacement behavior often to create the new “wiring” your brain requires to make that your go-to habit.

10 Keep track of your progress and feelings. Keep a daily journal, as it can help you stay focused on your goal and easily identify problem areas or situations.

11 Create a monetary goal and reward yourself. Most bad habits come with a price tag—eating out too much, drinking and smoking are all behaviors that cost money. So, save what you would be spending on those habits and put it towards something you desire like a trip or new outfit.

12 Seek support. You’ll need encouragement and people to help keep you accountable. Whether it’s an organized support group or an exercise buddy, find the right people to help you along the way.

13 Be prepared for failures and setbacks. It’s normal to have a slip-up. Don’t beat yourself up; just get back on track right away.

14 Make adjustments. If taking a walk isn’t getting your mind off of having a bag of cookies, be flexible and grant yourself the power to make an adjustment. Maybe you can eat half of the cookie to satisfy the craving. It doesn’t always have to be all or nothing.

15 Create barriers to the habit. Find a friend or family member who disapproves of your habit. Tell yourself you will not indulge in your bad habit whenever you are around that person.

16 Understand that you won’t change overnight. It takes time to change a behavior. You may want to go back to your habit months or a year after trying to quit. As long as you’re still improving, don’t pay too much attention to how long the process is taking.



Research indicates it takes **21-30 days** of daily practice to form a new habit.



Got Arthritis?

The Best Ways to Cope

Chronic arthritis pain, characterized by pain, pressure, stiffness and/or swelling in the joints, is a condition suffered by approximately 50 million Americans. If you have arthritis, following your doctor's recommendations is essential, but good self-care can prove just as critical when it comes to successfully treating and managing the disease.

The following self-care steps can help ease the pain of arthritis, allowing you to enjoy your life more fully.

Rely on the magic of motion. It may seem counter intuitive, but regular exercise helps relieve and prevent arthritis pain. When you move, you're sustaining or building muscle tissue and strong muscles help protect and support your joints. Moreover, regular exercise can help stabilize a weak or damaged joint and promote flexibility, which can reduce pain and stiffness.

A brisk walk, cycling or swimming are great activities for arthritis sufferers. You probably want to avoid activities that involve high impact and repetitive motion, such as running, jumping or high-impact aerobics.

Some other tips to keep in mind while exercising:

- **Take 5-15 minutes to warm up.** Warm up with a slow, easy walk and then do some light stretching. Stretching helps keep your joints and muscles flexible, relieves stress and can help you maintain your daily activities.
- **Take note of how you feel when you're done.** If your body and joints ache after a workout, you're probably going too hard, so you'll want to reduce the intensity or length of your workout. On the other hand, if you feel great after a workout, very gradually add a little intensity to it.

If you suffer from chronic arthritis, it's probably a good idea to check with your doctor before starting an exercise program.

A few other tips:



Try to lose a few pounds if you're overweight.

Excess pounds put stress on your joints. Aim for just a few pounds (and keep going if you're successful and have more to lose). One study found that for overweight people with knee osteoarthritis, each pound of weight they lost resulted in a four-pound reduction in pressure exerted on their knees as they walked.



Use cold therapy.

Cold therapy, like using ice packs on sore muscles, can relieve pain and inflammation. Try it after exercise or if you feel sore and achy.

Get the Most out of Your Medical Care

If you have arthritis or think you may have it, follow these steps:

→ **See your doctor for a diagnosis and treatment plan.** There are several types of arthritis, so it's important that you have

a professional properly diagnose you and get you on the right treatment plan.

→ **Don't stop taking prescribed medication without checking with your doc first.** Your doc needs to know what's working for you and what's not. Your doc can suggest something else or inform you that it may take a certain

amount of time for the medication to kick in.

→ **Take an active role in your care.** New advancements and approaches are introduced to the public regularly. Don't be shy—ask your doctor if there are any new medications or therapies you can explore.

Passing the Torch!



Keep Your Fitness Momentum Going

When Olympic athletes cross the globe, passing that iconic torch from one champion to another, the effect is inspiring. A symbol of peace, strength and resilience—the Olympic torch reminds us all of the best that we can be. Fortunately, we don't need to wait for the Olympics to “pass the torch.” Every day, we can strive to achieve our best in fitness, work and family life. And we can instill those values within ourselves as well as pass those ideals on to our friends, families and co-workers. Here's how.

THE PROBLEM: You're losing motivation and commitment.

THE SOLUTION: Seek support.

A fitness buddy, such as a coworker, spouse, trainer, coach or mentor can assist you with an added dose of reality to overcome unrealistic expectations, injury, stress, travel, old unhealthy habits, negative self-talk, tempting situations or lack of motivation.

Do it now: Identify who your fitness supporters are or might be. Having a friend or a spouse who can provide you with positive encouragement and accountability is key to a successful fitness program, so ask those people to come along with you on your walk or workout.

THE PROBLEM: You're lacking in the inspiration department.

THE SOLUTION: Be a coach. Be the coach and cheerleader to those who have helped you out or to those who you know need it.

Do it now: Consider starting your own health and fitness challenge, event or movement to help others reach their desired goals. Start a 5K walking training group, ½ marathon training sessions, a hiking club or a mountain climbing club. Set a date for everyone in the group to attain a goal together. It might be participating in a company sponsored 5K for charity or a fun run in your community. In my 20 years of fitness experience, I have realized that there is no better way to achieve your own goals than to help others reach theirs.

THE PROBLEM: You're discouraged and disappointed with your results.

THE SOLUTION: Be realistic and honest.

It's critical that you are honest with yourself and that your friends, mentors and coaches are truthful with you. To be sure, it's important to be encouraging while also being truthful. It's essential to realize that our goals are not achievable overnight.

Do it now: By working together with others to systematically plan achievable mini-goals, you and your "fitness team" will be more likely to succeed. For example, instead of beginning your fitness program with the idea that you will lose six pounds your first week, focus on setting a daily goal for you and your exercise buddies to eat sensibly and get more exercise than you did yesterday. Each day you accomplish this goal is a day you succeeded—and each success is something you can use to encourage someone else!



About
Sean Foy MA

Sean Foy is an internationally renowned authority on fitness, weight management and healthy living, and New York Times best-selling co-author of *The Daniel Plan*, *The Burst Workout* and WELCOA's *Fitness That Works* and *Walking 4 Wellness*. As an author, exercise physiologist, behavioral coach and speaker, Sean has earned the reputation as "America's Fast Fitness Expert." For more information, visit www.wintodaywellness.com



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DID YOU KNOW?

60

percent

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT THOSE WHO LIVE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE (EAT WELL, EXERCISE, MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT AND LIMIT ALCOHOL AND AVOID TOBACCO) CAN **REDUCE THE CHANCES OF DEMENTIA BY UP TO 60 PERCENT.**

21-30

days

RESEARCH INDICATES IT TAKES **21-30 DAYS OF DAILY PRACTICE** TO FORM A NEW HABIT.

50

million

NUMBER OF AMERICANS WHO SUFFER FROM **CHRONIC ARTHRITIS PAIN.**

Fast Facts on Aging

- Between 2000 and 2050, the number of people age 60 years and over is expected to increase from 605 million to 2 billion.
- Even in the poorest countries, the main health burdens for the elderly are non-communicable diseases like heart disease, stroke and chronic lung disease.
- Although excellent professional medical care is essential for promoting and maintaining the elderly's health, most training for health professionals does not include instruction about specific care for older people.
- The key to healthy aging is consistent life-long healthy behaviors. This includes a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, regular physical activity and limited or no exposure to smoking, alcohol or toxic substances.
- It's never too late to start a healthy behavior. The benefits of physical activity can be realized immediately regardless of age. Moreover, research has shown that the risk of premature death decreases by 50 percent if someone gives up smoking between 60 and 75 years of age.

Source: World Health Organization

What's In A Number?

12

years

Those who don't have healthy habits are apt to develop heart disease 12 years earlier than their healthier counterparts.

BEST CHOICE

21 to 30

days

Stick to healthy behaviors like exercise and eating right for this long, and it will likely become a habit—something that you don't even have to think about or make a conscious effort to do.



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