

Personal Best

HOPE Health Letter®

NOVEMBER 2021

Breathe Easier

It's time again for the Great American Smokeout. On November 18, thousands of people in the U.S. will take the first step toward better health and living tobacco-free. Cigarette smoking can shorten one's life and harm nearly every organ in the body. Millions of Americans live with smoking-related diseases, including emphysema and chronic bronchitis.



Cigarette smoking causes an estimated 480,000 deaths every year in the U.S.

Fortunately, the number of deaths triggered by smoking have declined in the past several decades, from 42% in 1965 to about 15.5% in 2016, thanks in part to the American Cancer Society, which has sponsored the Smokeout for 40 years.

Kicking smoking can be very hard. Most smokers try quitting several times before they make it across home plate. Take steps to set yourself up for success with strategies recommended by smokefree.gov, including:

- Asking your health care provider about smoking cessation medications.
- Throwing away your cigarettes, lighters, matches and ashtrays.
- Contacting close friends and asking for their support as you are quitting.
- Chatting online or working with a local in-person trained smoking cessation counselor.
- Signing up for a Smokefree app or text message program to get daily tips and support.

When cravings strike: Stop what you're doing and do something else. Text a friend. Get up and exercise. Drink some water and take deep breaths. Go where others aren't smoking.



Now, to kick cigarettes (or encourage a friend, relative or teenager to quit), mark your calendar to get started on November 18.

Make an appointment with your provider for advice or contact smokefree.gov for a personalized quit plan — **and breathe easier.**

BEST bits

■ **Reminder:** Touching your face with dirty hands can spread infections. Important times to wash your hands include before, during and after preparing food, after using the bathroom and before and after eating. Surprisingly, less than 75% of women and less than 50% of men wash their hands after using the bathroom.

Wash your hands with soap and cold or warm water for at least 20 seconds. Bacteria can hide under your fingernails, so scrub them when washing up, and keep your hands away from your face. Learn more at cdc.gov/handwashing.

■ **Exercise bands** offer a portable and convenient way to build muscle. Bands can challenge virtually every muscle in your body through progressive resistance. Going through the circular phase of a move, such as when you stretch the band by pulling it up in a bicep curl, increases the exercise demand. You can increase the weight demand by doing more reps or progressing to bands with higher levels of resistance. **Tip:** Test your strength by slowly moving through each movement. Never release your band while it's under tension; this can cause the band to snap back at you, causing injury.

Note: Due to production lead time, this issue may not reflect the current COVID-19 situation in some or all regions of the U.S. For the most up-to-date pandemic information visit coronavirus.gov.

“I watch cooking change the cook, just as it transforms the food.”

— Laura Esquivel

eating smart

November is Diabetes Month.



Diabetes and Your Plate

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD



The foods you choose have a powerful role to play if you are managing type 1, type 2 or gestational diabetes.

Since diabetes is affected by diet, people often wonder about the changes they need to make in their eating patterns.

The answer is that there's no exact one-size-fits-all eating plan for everyone with diabetes, since everybody responds differently to foods, beverages and dietary patterns. Research shows that there's no precise percentage of calories from carbohydrate, protein and fat that will benefit all people with diabetes. That means that a low-carb diet may work for some, while a higher amount of carbs may work for others.

For this reason, one common recommendation for people managing any type of diabetes is to see a registered dietitian for a personalized nutrition plan to meet their individual needs (check with your insurance for coverage). One diet cannot work for everyone, since we all have different personal preferences, medical conditions, cultural backgrounds, and vary in which foods are available and affordable to us.

TIP of the MONTH

Fruit and Diabetes Risk Study

A recently published study revealed that participants who ate two or three daily servings of whole fruit (but not fruit juice) had a 36% lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes at five years of follow-up. Although fruit contains some sugar, it's balanced by fiber, antioxidants and vitamins, which mitigate diabetes risk. Researchers also found that while fruit was helpful, fruit juice was not. **Bottom line:** Choose whole fruit instead of fruit juice most often to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.



Once your plan is set by a dietitian, it will likely highlight vegetables, fruit, sources of protein (such as fish, chicken and tofu) and will be lower in ultra-processed foods (such as candy, soda and baked goods) to help manage blood sugar levels. Your dietitian may also teach you the difference in fiber content between whole grains (such as brown rice, whole wheat or oats) and refined grains (such as white rice and white bread).

The precise types and amounts of food for your eating plan will be agreed upon by you and your dietitian, based on your preferences and health goals.

Grilled Salmon with Mango Salsa

EASY recipe

- 1 ripe mango, peeled and diced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- ¼ cup chopped red onion
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 jalapeño pepper, diced (optional)
- 1 lime, quartered
- ½ tsp salt, *divided*
- 2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 (16 oz.) salmon fillets



In a bowl, combine the mango, red pepper, onion, cilantro and jalapeño (if using). **Squeeze** lime juice over mixture, and stir to combine. **Salt** to taste. **Set** aside to let flavors develop. **Set** your skillet or indoor grill at medium heat and add olive oil. **Lightly** salt salmon, and add to the hot oil in the skillet. **Cook** 4 minutes, then turn and cook another 4 to 5 minutes or to your desired doneness. **Serve** salmon topped with mango salsa.

Makes 4 servings. Per serving: 272 calories | 32g protein | 11g total fat | 2g saturated fat | 3g mono fat | 5g poly fat | 11g carbohydrate | 8g sugar | 2g fiber | 355mg sodium



— Serena Williams

QuikRisk™ Self-Assessment: Getting enough sleep?



Frequent lack of sleep can be very costly to your health and enjoyment of daily living. Check the boxes that apply:

- I have trouble falling asleep.
- I have too much on my mind to fall asleep or go back to sleep.
- I need more than 30 minutes to fall asleep.
- I can't go back to sleep when I wake up during normal sleep hours.
- I wake up too early.
- I feel tired upon waking, despite apparently normal sleep.
- I awaken frequently during sleep time.
- I have uncontrolled episodes of falling asleep during the day.

How did you do?

If you experience two or more of these situations regularly, you may have developed a problematic sleep pattern — one that may be interfering with your health and safety.

Start taking steps to sleep better:

1. Target seven to nine hours per night.
2. Maintain a consistent sleep schedule, even on non-work days.
3. Set boundaries in your social life to maintain scheduled sleep time.
4. Avoid using electronics an hour prior to sleeping.
5. Get regular exercise and minimize alcohol.
6. Avoid caffeinated beverages and other caffeine sources.

Don't accept ongoing lack of sleep as normal. It can put you at risk for accidents and serious health problems, including: weakened immunity, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity and overall lower quality of life.

Coughs are normal with colds or flu. But coughing can interfere with sleep. Over-the-counter cough medications have side effects and aren't recommended for young children. Instead, the FDA recommends non-drug remedies: Drink lots of warm liquids to soothe your throat and thin mucus. Using a humidifier and taking warm showers calm coughs by putting moisture in the air. For adults and older kids, cough drops or hard candy can decrease cough-triggering throat tickles. If coughs persist or worsen, call your health care provider.

Know Your Family Health History

Thursday, November 25, is Thanksgiving Day — and Family Health History Day. The U.S. Surgeon General chose this date for good reason — many people will be at family gatherings or in touch with relatives in other ways on Thanksgiving. So, it's a perfect time to check on your family's health status and learn about any medical problems. In fact, this information can help you live a longer, healthier life.

Here's why: If family members have developed certain diseases, such as diabetes, osteoporosis, heart disease and some types of cancer, you may be at higher risk for these health problems.

Sharing your family health history with your health care providers helps them advise you how to lower your risks through lifestyle changes and medication, if needed. You can also learn early warning signs of certain health problems and how often you need testing for a disease that has affected family members.



If you are planning a pregnancy, learn the health history of your relatives and your partner. If birth defects, developmental disabilities and other genetic diseases seem to run in either family, your provider may recommend genetic testing.

To learn more, search for **My Family Health Portrait** at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov). This resource makes it easy to record your family health history information in one place. Download or print the information and share it with your family and your provider.

“Making fitness a priority will energize you, make you look and feel better, and help diffuse stress.”

— Mary Helen Bowers



Smoking cigarettes is a major risk for lung cancer, but not the only one. Secondhand smoke is also linked to lung cancer. Learn about other risks during **Lung Cancer Awareness Month**. Radon, a natural source of lung cancer-linked radioactivity, is found in some homes; the EPA recommends testing. Some radiation therapy for cancer can also raise lung cancer risk; talk to your health care provider about regular screenings. And follow safety guidelines in your workplace to avoid carcinogens linked to lung cancer. Learn more at cancer.org/cancer/lung-cancer.html.



Antibiotics Facts You Need to Know

Antibiotics save lives, but misuse of these drugs is dangerous. The over-prescribing of antibiotics is creating a potentially devastating health problem — antibiotic resistance.

That doesn't mean people are becoming resistant to antibiotics. It means some bacteria have become resistant to the drugs created to kill them. And types of antibiotic-resistant bacteria are increasing.

Antibiotic resistance is a worldwide, urgent public health concern because infections caused by antibiotic-resistant germs can be difficult and sometimes impossible to treat. In the U.S., almost three million people are infected with antibiotic-resistant bacteria or fungi every year, and more than 35,000 die as a result, according to the CDC.

To help fight antibiotic-resistant bacteria, doctors and patients need to work together to stop unnecessary antibiotic use. Many infections do not require antibiotics and patients should not pressure health care providers for the drugs if they are not indicated.



Did you know?

Close to 30% of antibiotics prescribed by doctors in the U.S. and emergency departments are unnecessary. The CDC calls improving this situation a “national priority.”

Remember, antibiotics are powerful drugs that can have serious side effects. And they will not help infections caused by viruses, such as colds, flu and COVID-19. Learn more at cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

EXPERT advice

— Eric Endlich, PhD

Q: Am I a compulsive buyer?

A: A shopping addiction differs from a periodic splurge. Compulsive shoppers act on repeated, uncontrollable urges to spend (often to manage negative emotions), regardless of consequences. They get pleasure from the shopping experience itself.

You may be a compulsive spender if:

- You spend all of your disposable income.
- You buy things you can't afford or overdraw your account buying unneeded items.
- You're anxious when you don't shop, and shopping improves your mood.
- You pay your minimum credit card balance yet continue charging.
- Others complain about your spending habits.



- Your behavior causes financial or relationship problems.
- You hide your purchases and feel remorse afterward.

If applicable, consider seeking assistance via psychotherapy, support groups (e.g., Debtors Anonymous), credit counseling or medication (if the behavior stems from mental health issues).



QuikQuiz™: What's Your GERD IQ?

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) affects nearly 20% of the U.S. population. Test your knowledge of this common condition.

True or False?

- T F** GERD is the backup of stomach acid into the esophagus.
- T F** GERD causes heartburn.
- T F** People with GERD can reduce symptoms by avoiding certain foods and drinks.
- T F** GERD is diagnosed by blood tests.
- T F** There is no cure for GERD.

The **exact cause of GERD is unknown**. But several factors can worsen the symptoms: obesity, smoking, diabetes, alcohol use and heavy caffeine use. Positive self-treatment: **1)** Avoid large meals, **2)** avoid fatty, spicy and fried foods, **3)** avoid eating close to bedtime (wait two to three hours before retiring), **4)** relax and use good posture when eating, **5)** lose weight if needed, and **6)** wait two hours after eating before exercise.



ANSWERS:

- 1. True** – GERD is also known as acid reflux, which causes regurgitation (backward flowing of stomach acid).
- 2. True** – When refluxed stomach acid touches the lining of the esophagus, it typically causes a burning sensation in the chest (heartburn) or in the throat (acid indigestion).
- 3. True** – Primary dietary items to avoid include acidic, greasy or spicy foods, caffeine and alcohol.
- 4. False** – GERD may be diagnosed by endoscopy, biopsy, X-ray, 24-hour esophageal acid testing, and esophageal acid perfusion.
- 5. True** – GERD is a chronic condition that, while incurable, is treatable with dietary changes and medications.

— Elizabeth Smoots, MD

EXPERT advice

Q: What is coinfection?

A: **Coinfection means having more than one infection at the same time.** During this flu season, like the 2020-2021 flu season, getting flu and COVID-19 is of special concern and it's possible to have both infections at once. The symptoms are similar but testing can help determine if you are sick with the flu, COVID-19 or both.

Factors that may increase the risk of complications include: Having a weak immune system; active chronic disease especially of the lungs, heart or kidneys; obesity; pregnancy or being older than 65 can place you at increased risk for either infection.

The best way to avoid coinfection is to get a flu shot. This is especially important for those at risk for complications. If you haven't already gotten a COVID-19 shot, getting this vaccine can help, too. And after receiving the vaccines, if you still get a coinfection, your risks for hospitalization and death are lower.



Age is something that doesn't matter, unless you are a cheese.

— Luis Bunuel



Winter can take a toll on your skin.

November is **National Healthy Skin Month**, a great time to commit to protecting your hands, face and other exposed areas. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends lip balm and the generous use of moisturizers formulated for your skin type (dry, oily, combination and/or sensitive). Don't skip sunscreen but do minimize skin-drying hot baths and avoid skin-damaging tanning beds. Check your skin regularly and consult your health care provider about rashes, changes in moles or other concerns.

Find Hidden Fees

Financial surprises can often be a good thing — an unexpected discount or sale, for example.

Hidden fees, on the other hand, are frustrating, unwanted costs we would rather avoid.

One source of potentially hidden fees is investment accounts. Watch out for:

1. Expense ratio: This is what it costs to manage the fund, expressed as a percentage. This usually applies to mutual funds. So, if your account earned 9% but had a 2% expense ratio, you only earned 7% on your shares.

2. Custodian fees are usually part of retirement accounts. They cover costs associated with IRS regulations.

3. Annual fees are also charged by retirement accounts.

4. Commissions are payments brokers typically receive for their services that are passed on to you.

5. Load fees are applied to buying and selling shares. You pay a front-end load fee when you purchase shares, and a back-end fee is charged when you sell shares. Look for no-load mutual funds to avoid load fees.

6. Advisory fees or management fees are presented as a percentage of total assets. They cover the wealth strategies given by management.

In 2021, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission renewed its commitment to clarify these costs for investors, stating their intention to “focus on firms that have practices or business models that may create increased risks that investors will pay inadequately disclosed fees, expenses, or other charges.”

Over-Caffeinated?

The smell of coffee is a welcome joy to many of us in the morning. In fact, millions rely on coffee to give them that extra lift throughout the day. Coffee drinkers get that lift from caffeine.

However, how much caffeine is too much? According to the Mayo Clinic, while it depends on many things — such as your weight, age, health and sensitivity to caffeine — it is generally safe to consume up to 400 mg of caffeine a day: That’s the amount found in roughly four cups of coffee or 12 cups of black tea.

Caution: Pure, powdered caffeine or highly concentrated liquid caffeine can be toxic, causing serious health issues or death. For example, just one teaspoon of powdered caffeine is equal to 28 cups of coffee.

Here are some other tips to consider before you reach for that extra cup of Joe:

Cut back on caffeine if you’re drinking more than four cups of caffeinated coffee (or equivalent) a day. Side effects include fast heartbeat, muscle tremors and insomnia to name a few. **Tip:** Cut back gradually; an abrupt decrease can lead to unpleasant side effects.

Know that coffee, cola and energy drinks aren’t the only sources of caffeine. It is also in teas, chocolate, flavorings and non-cola soft drinks, and it can be added to certain foods.

Stop caffeine intake a minimum of six hours before bedtime, advises the Sleep Foundation. Even small amounts of caffeine in the afternoon or evening can disrupt your sleep.

Be aware that some medications and supplements can react adversely with caffeine. Ask your health care provider to be sure. For example, mixing ephedrine with caffeine can increase your risk of high blood pressure, stroke, heart attack or seizures.

Drink decaf. It contains a bit of caffeine, but can have the look and taste of fully caffeinated coffee.



National Drowsy Driving Prevention Week is November 7 to 13.

SAFETY CORNER

Avoiding Drowsy Driving Disasters

Just a few seconds of shut-eye when you’re behind the wheel can have deadly consequences. And sometimes you may not even be aware that you’re falling asleep.

Microsleeps occur when a person falls asleep for a few seconds, increasing the risk of a collision or running off the road. Even just driving while fatigued can result in accidents; sleep deprivation leads to mental impairment that is similar to being drunk. Driving drowsy can occur anytime, but teenagers, people who drive for a living, work night shifts or long hours, and those with insomnia or sleep disorders are most prone to it.

How to avoid the dangers of drowsy driving:

- **Limit** your hours driving. Break a long trip into smaller trips.
- **Avoid** driving at night and early afternoon.
- **Get** a good night’s sleep before you travel.
- **Bring** a buddy who can help you drive.
- **Watch** for warning signs that you are too drowsy to drive. Examples: frequent yawning, feelings of dozing off, tired eyes, drifting into other lanes, inability to remember the last few miles or minutes of driving, missing a sign or exit. If you notice any of these signs, pull over and rest.



KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

Vaccination and Screening Guide



Getting screened and getting immunized are everyone's top health goals. **The following recommendations are for normal-risk adults.** People at increased risk may have different needs based on their provider's advice.

Adult Immunizations

Vaccine	Dose and When Needed	Date Received
COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2)	Dosage varies.	
Hepatitis A	2 or 3 doses if at risk.	
Hepatitis B	2 or 3 doses if at risk.	
Human Papilloma-virus (HPV)	2 or 3 doses, previously unvaccinated through age 26.	
Influenza (Flu)	1 dose every year.	
Measles, Mumps, Rubella	1 or 2 doses if at risk.	
Meningococcal Meningitis	1 or more doses if at risk, as advised.	
Pneumococcal PCV13 PPSV23	1 dose. 1 or 2 doses as advised.	
Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis	Get Tdap once, then a Td or Tdap booster every 10 years.	
Varicella (Chickenpox)	2 doses if at risk.	
Zoster (Shingles)	2 doses at 50 and older.	

Source: CDC. Recommendations are subject to change (www.cdc.gov/vaccines/default.htm). Foreign travel may require additional immunizations.

Healthy Measures — Screenings

Test/Exam	When Needed	Normal Levels	Date/Results	Date/Results
Blood Pressure	Every health care visit or at least every 2 years.			
Systolic		Below 120		
Diastolic		Below 80		
Cholesterol	Starting at 20 and every 4 to 6 years or as advised.			
Total		Below 200		
HDL Women		Above 50		
HDL Men		Above 40		
LDL		Below 130		
Triglycerides		Below 150		
Colorectal Cancer	Starting at 45 and repeat as advised.	N/A		
Dental, Eye and Hearing	As advised.	N/A		
Blood Sugar	Starting at 45 and every 3 years or as advised.	Below 100 (fasting) or below 5.7% (A1C)		
Skin Cancer	As advised.	N/A		
Weight			Recommended exercise	
Body Mass Index (BMI)	Goal: 18.5 – 24.9	_____		
Waist Measurement (in inches)	Goal: Below 35 inches (women)	_____		
	Goal: Below 40 inches (men)	_____		
Weight (pounds)				
Date				
Depression	As advised.	N/A		

As advised: Consult your health care provider if you have symptoms or special risks, such as family history, for these conditions. Your target levels may differ if you have a condition, such as diabetes or heart disease. Sources: ACS, ADA, AHA, CDC and NCEP. • Physician review: 4.2021

Screenings for Women Only

Test/Exam	When Needed	Date/Results
Breast Cancer	Begin at 40 to 44, if desired. 45 to 54: Annually. 55+: Every 1 to 2 years.	
Cervical Cancer	Starting at 21 or as advised.	
Osteoporosis	Starting at 65 or earlier as advised.	

Sources: ACS, NOF.

Screenings for Men Only

Test/Exam	When Needed	Date/Results
Prostate Cancer	Starting at 50, if advised.	

Source: ACS.

Women and Men: Talk to your health care provider about unusual symptoms and other health concerns not listed, such as sexually transmitted infections, HIV, anxiety and tobacco use. **Be a partner in your health care.**

As advised: Consult your health care provider if you have symptoms or special risks, such as family history, for these conditions.



DR. ZORBA'S corner

Sugar: It's in about 68% of packaged foods in the grocery store. America is one of the highest sugar-consuming countries, and individually we take in nearly 60 pounds of the stuff every year, or about 19 tsp per day. Scientists are researching the role of excess sugar consumption (more than 12 teaspoons per day) as a risk factor for developing heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity and some types of cancer. In fact, new research shows that excess sugar intake may double colon cancer risk in younger women. The Nurses' Health Study II of 95,464 participants revealed that women who drank two or more sugar-sweetened drinks a day had two times the risk of getting bowel cancer before their 50th birthday. (**Note:** The study did not establish sugar intake as a cause.) **Bottom line:** Cut back on sugar any way you can; start by replacing sugar-sweetened beverages with water more often. — Zorba Paster, MD

Stay in Touch. Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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November Fill-in-the-Blank Puzzle

Find out how well you know the topics covered in this issue of the newsletter.

- 1 The _____ you choose have a powerful role to play if you are managing type 1, type 2 or gestational diabetes.
- 2 To sleep better, avoid using _____ an hour prior to sleeping.
- 3 _____ medications aren't recommended for young children.
- 4 Some _____ have become resistant to the drugs created to kill them.
- 5 _____ is a chronic condition that, while incurable, is treatable with dietary changes and medications.
- 6 It is generally safe to consume up to 400 mg of _____ a day.
- 7 _____ occur when a person falls asleep for a few seconds.
- 8 _____ is in about 68% of packaged foods in the grocery store.



You'll find the answers at personalbest.com/extras/Nov2021puzzle.pdf.

The Smart Moves Toolkit, including this issue's printable download, Nutrition and the Common Cold, is at personalbest.com/extras/21V11tools.