



HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2021

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HIGHLIGHTS for the November 2021 Newsletter

5 Jolly-Good Ways to Prevent Holiday Weight Gain

Did you know the average adult gains 1 to 2 pounds during the holidays? That might not sound like much, but it starts to add up from year to year. Check out these jolly-good ways to prevent holiday weight gain.

8 Simple Ways to Eat Less Sodium

What's really in your food? If your diet includes things like fast food, burgers, fries, pizza, canned soup, and microwave meals, you're probably eating too much sodium. It's a major risk factor for high blood pressure and heart disease. But it doesn't have to be.

Walk THIS Way to Burn More Calories

Take a walk. You've heard the advice before. But new research suggests walking in a different way can help you tip the scale in the right direction. Here's what you need to know....

Y-Axis: Blowing Smoke?

Can vaping help you quit smoking? You might be surprised by what researchers recently found in the vape cloud of white smoke and chemicals. Here's what you need to know...

Recipe: Baked Sweet Potatoes and Apples

Looking for a sweet and tasty holiday treat? Give this Baked Sweet Potatoes and Apples recipe a try.

Take the November Health Challenge!

Improve Digestion: Practice healthy habits to improve gut health.

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question: What can I do to prevent back pain?

NEWSLETTER

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THE Y AXIS



Blowing Smoke?



Is vaping better than smoking?

You know... instead of sucking on a cigarette, vapers huff a nicotine-charged device and exhale a white cloud of chemicals.

Stop blowing smoke. If you're trying to quit tobacco and cigarettes, vaping isn't the answer.

In a recent study, smokers who switched to vape were 8.5 times more likely to go back to cigarettes within a year, compared to people who quit using other methods⁴

If you want to quit smoking, you need a plan and support. Medication and behavior change therapy can help, too.

And *NOW* is always the best time to start.

COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:

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5 Jolly-Good Ways to Prevent Holiday Weight Gain

Prevent holiday weight gain with healthy lifestyle choices

Did you know the average adult gains one to two pounds during the holidays from overeating, stress, and lack of exercise?

That may not seem like much, but it adds up from year to year. You can still enjoy the holidays, but you need a plan to stay healthy. Here are 5 things you can do:

1. Step on the scale...Every Day!

In a recent study, researchers tracked changes in weight for a group of people from November through January.¹

Those who weighed in every day either lost weight or maintained their weight. Those who skipped the scale gained weight. It's a simple way to remind yourself to make healthy choices.

2. Focus on fruits and vegetables

At meal time, half your plate should include fruits and vegetables.

3. Take it easy on the treats

In just a few minutes, you could eat 1,000+ empty calories (think eggnog, fudge, cookies) and be well on your way to gaining weight.

4. Eat healthy snacks...

Try sliced vegetables with hummus, an apple, Greek yogurt, or a handful of nuts.

5. Walk it off

Make time to exercise during the holidays. Aim for 30 to 60 minutes a day of moderate physical activity. Do your best to maintain your exercise habits throughout the holidays.

Give yourself the gift of good health by making a plan to eat healthy and exercise regularly during the holidays.

MORE

Harvard's healthy holiday habits
<https://tinyurl.com/b47xscyp>

8 Simple Ways to Eat Less Sodium

High-sodium diet doubles risk for heart failure

Imagine filling a teaspoon with salt and eating it. Your tongue and your brain would deliver an instant message: "Yuck! Too salty!"

And you would reach for the nearest glass of water to wash out your mouth.

Sounds gross to eat that much salt at once, right? The truth...most people eat nearly twice that amount of salt every day.

- **That's more than double** the amount of sodium than recommended (less than 1,500 mg per day) to keep the heart healthy.
- **A typical fast-food meal** like a burger and fries contains 1,400+ mg of sodium.
- **Many microwave meals** and canned soups contain more than 1,000 mg in a single serving.

- **Packaged and processed** snacks, sauces, dressings, meats, soups and chips are also high in sodium.



The trouble with high-sodium habits

New research by the European Society of Cardiology suggests that a high-sodium diet doubles the risk for heart failure.² Too much sodium also raises the risk for:

- High blood pressure
- Stroke
- Kidney disease
- Poor bone health



Baked Sweet Potatoes and Apples

Need a sweet treat for the holidays? Try this tasty recipe.⁵

Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- 1/4 C sugar
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 3 medium sweet potatoes
- 2 medium sweet apples
- 3 T light margarine

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- Lightly spray a casserole dish with cooking spray.
- Peel sweet potatoes. Cut crosswise into 1/4-inch slices. Peel apples. Slice into 10 wedges. Set aside.
- In a small bowl, stir together sugar and cinnamon.
- In the casserole dish, layer in order half each of the sweet potatoes, apples, and cinnamon-sugar. Dot with about half the margarine. Repeat.
- Bake, covered, for 1 hour to 1 hour 15 minutes, or until the sweet potatoes and apples are soft.

Walk THIS Way to Burn More Calories

Varied walking speed burns 20% more

When mother-and-daughter team Helga and Clara Estby walked from Washington state to New York City in 1896, few thought they would make it.

Many thought they were crazy to try. They left home with some food, a compass, pepper spray, a revolver, and a curling iron.

Q: Why did they walk their way through 14 states to the Big Apple?

A: They hoped to win \$10,000 in prize money to save the family farm.

Pick up the pace to burn more calories

You may not have a family farm. And you might not have plans to walk across the country. But even a little walking every day is good for your health.

MORE
5 surprising health benefits of walking
<https://tinyurl.com/pepcrh9s>

A new study suggests that varying your pace as you walk can burn 20 percent more calories than walking at an even pace.³

Researchers also found that people generally walk faster when they're tasked with walking longer distances...



- Helga and Clara covered an average of 25 miles per day.
- They walked faster after they ditched their long dresses for shorter skirts.
- They crossed streams, climbed mountains, and battled the elements.
- Many people doubted they could walk that far.

Want to get more from your daily walk?

Pick up the pace a few times while you're out.

If Helga and Clara were still around, they'd tell you to wear comfortable clothes, too. Walk a little faster, and you'll elevate your heart rate, burn more calories, and strengthen your heart, lungs, and muscles.

8 Simple Ways to Eat Less Sodium (continued from page 1)

8 sodium habits for better health

Fortunately, a few simple changes can help you cut back on the amount of sodium you consume. Here are some things you can do:

- 1. Eat** more fresh fruits and veggies.
- 2. Buy** low-sodium foods and soups.
- 3. Read** food labels and track your sodium intake.
- 4. Drink** water instead of soft drinks.

5. Use low-sodium salad dressings made with extra-virgin olive oil or vinegar.

6. Cut back on eating fast-food and packaged meals.

7. Cook at home more often. Use herbs and spices instead of salt to season food.

8. Go easy on the salt shaker.

MORE
Effects of a high-sodium diet
<https://tinyurl.com/2njchnc9>

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Improve Digestion

100,000,000 Americans suffer from digestive issues.

Improve Digestion by:

- Eating fiber-rich foods
- Drinking water
- Exercising regularly
- Getting enough sleep
- Managing stress
- Avoiding alcohol and tobacco
- Taking probiotics
- Avoiding processed foods
- Eating slowly and chewing thoroughly
- Avoiding carbonated drinks
- Avoiding fatty and greasy foods
- Avoiding spicy foods
- Avoiding artificial sweeteners
- Avoiding artificial colors and flavors
- Avoiding artificial preservatives
- Avoiding artificial trans fats
- Avoiding artificial sweeteners
- Avoiding artificial colors and flavors
- Avoiding artificial preservatives
- Avoiding artificial trans fats

What are you doing?

Dr. Don Hall, MD, is a board-certified gastroenterologist and a leading expert in digestive health. He is the author of the book *100 Ways to Improve Digestion*, which provides practical tips for improving gut health. Dr. Hall is also a frequent speaker at national and international conferences on digestive health.

Take the November Health Challenge!

Improve Digestion: Practice healthy habits to improve gut health

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question:

What can I do to prevent back pain?

WELLNESS CHALLENGE

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Improve Digestion



CHALLENGE
Practice healthy habits to improve gut health

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read "Improve Digestion."
2. Practice healthy habits to improve gut health.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires



When do we eat?

It's a question the comic-book detective Dick Tracy gets asked incessantly by his unlikely sidekick... The Kid.

The Kid is ravenous. And they hit Mike's Diner as often as possible in between car chases, crime bosses, and old-school gangsters.

The Kid gulps down soda. He shovels in three-bean chili.

He eats mountains of ice-cream sundaes loaded with toppings. And he'll try anything else on the menu that fits the description of salty, savoury, and sweet.

But if you're eating like The Kid and loading up like every meal might be your last, your gut might have a few things to say about that.

QUIZ: Give Yourself a Gut Check

How much do you know about your eating habits and digestion?



- | | T | F | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The average adult eats about 2,000 pounds of food a year. |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fiber is a natural laxative and aids in digestion. |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Your mouth makes about 2 cups of saliva a day to help digest food. |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drinking water does not help your body digest and break down food. |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | It takes about 12 to 24 hours to digest an average meal. |

How did you do? (Answers below). Your mouth makes about 6 cups of saliva a day to help digest food. Drinking water does help break down food and aid in digestion. Your food choices and eating habits can have a big impact on digestion and your health. In some cases, you may need to avoid certain foods or see a doctor for help with digestive problems.

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

You know, like...Burp! Belch! Gurgle! Blah!

If you're eating too much too often, or not eating enough healthy foods, chances are pretty good your gut might not always agree with your food choices.

Chowing down on the wrong foods can lead to stomach aches, heartburn, health problems, and a lot of time in the bathroom. Been there, done that?

If you've ever experienced digestion issues or poor gut health, you probably know the feeling. And it doesn't have to be that way. Healthy eating and lifestyle habits can improve digestion and your health.

Take the month-long challenge to Improve Digestion.

7 foods to supercharge your gut bacteria
<http://tinyurl.com/obx3j7y>

Chew on THIS for Better Health

Eat food. Digest it. Absorb the nutrients. Makes sense, right?

But are you eating foods high in nutrients? Or does your typical meal plan include pizza, burgers, fries, soda, and desserts?

What you eat can have a big impact on digestion and your overall health.

Did you know?... There are at least 1,000 kinds of microbes in your gut. As a group, they are called microbiota, or forms of bacteria. (You may know it by the term “gut flora.”). A healthy gut and good digestion can help prevent...¹

- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Certain types of cancer
- Inflammation
- Heart disease
- And other health problems

6 Healthy-Gut Habits to Improve Digestion

Want to prevent feeling bloated, sick to your stomach, and improve your health? It's not just about what you eat. Other lifestyle factors like stress, smoking, lack of exercise, being overweight, and gut-related diseases can impact your gut and overall health.

Here are 6 things you can do to improve digestion:

1 Don't smoke
Research shows that smoking prevents some forms of good bacteria your gut needs to promote health.²

If you smoke, quit. Try a mobile app, tobacco cessation product, or ask your doctor for help to quit smoking. If you don't smoke, don't start.

2 Manage stress in healthy ways
When you're stressed out, your gut isn't happy. In fact, studies show that stress can interfere with digestion.³ It can even lead to serious gut-health diseases, heartburn, and other problems.

Need to reduce stress? Practice deep breathing. Try yoga or meditation. Go for a walk. Talk to a friend or counselor. Do something you enjoy.

3 Maintain a healthy weight
Or lose weight if you need to. It's almost a chicken or the egg scenario. Being overweight can lead to gut-health problems. And gut-health problems can contribute to obesity.⁴

If you need to lose weight, improve your diet and be more active. If you're already at a healthy weight, keep it that way.

Keep your gut in check
<https://tinyurl.com/wpfwun6t>



4 Be more active
Health experts recommend getting 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.

Walk, jog, bike, or hit the gym. It's a great way to burn extra calories. And it helps strengthen your heart, lungs and muscles.

Research shows regular exercise also helps improve the microbiota in your gut.⁵

5 Avoid or limit red meat
Research shows that eating red meat is linked to diabetes, heart disease, certain types of cancer, and age-related memory loss. It can also damage the large intestine and cause cramps, diarrhea, and constipation.⁶

6 Eat a variety of healthy foods
Eat fruits, vegetables, and whole grain. They're high in fiber, vitamins, and nutrients that support gut health and digestion.⁷

Try foods like oatmeal, whole-grain cereal, berries, quinoa, onions, Greek yogurt, legumes, bananas, and leafy greens.

Hungry for better health? Start by making smart choices about your diet and lifestyle to improve digestion and gut health. prevent weight gain.⁵ Just don't overdo it. Some dried fruits contain as many calories as a candy bar (250 calories), and one banana contains about 100 calories.

Feed your gut for better health
<https://tinyurl.com/53x5bvcd>

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Improve Digestion

CHALLENGE
Practice healthy habits to improve gut health

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, or add to your digital calendar).
2. Practice healthy habits to improve digestion daily.
3. Use the calendar to record your actions and choices to improve gut health and digestion.
4. Review your progress at the end of each day, week, and at the end of the month. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™ ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	
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_____ Number of days this month I practiced habits to improve digestion
 _____ Number of days this month I exercised at least 30 minutes

Other wellness projects completed this month:

 Name _____ Date _____

ASK THE DOCTOR

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Q. What can I do to prevent back pain?

A. *Oh...my aching back!* Ever said that or know the feeling? When your back hurts, it can have a negative impact on your quality of life. But there are things you can do to prevent back pain.

Did you know... your posture, fitness level, amount of time you spend sitting, and even your diet are factors that determine the health of your back?

Back pain at work

An estimated 31 million Americans live with back pain daily. It's one of the most common reasons people miss work to see a doctor.¹ About 241 million missed work days are tied to back pain. But it doesn't have to be this way.

Here are eight ways to prevent back pain:

- 1. Exercise.** If you spend most of your days sitting, look for ways to be more active. A sedentary lifestyle can compromise the health of your back. Just 30 minutes a day of exercise can improve back strength and flexibility.²
- 2. Don't slouch** when standing. Keep your weight balanced on your feet. Your back supports weight most easily when curvature is reduced.



8 Ways to Protect Your Back

- 3. Use a stand-up desk or chair with good lumbar support,** proper position and height for the task.³
 - Keep your shoulders back.
 - Switch sitting positions often.
 - Periodically walk around or stretch for at least a few minutes every hour.
- 4. Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes.** High heels and some boots can alter your gait, putting added strain on your lower back when you walk.⁴
- 5. Adjust your sleep position** until you're comfortable. Sleeping on your side or on your back may work. Supporting your back or hips with pillows can also help improve sleep quality and reduce lower back pain.⁵
- 6. Use proper lifting techniques.** Lift with your knees, pull in your stomach muscles, and keep your head down and in line with your straight back. Keep the object close to your body. Do not twist when lifting. And if it seems too heavy, ask for help.
- 7. If you smoke, quit.** Smoking reduces blood flow to the lower spine and causes the spinal discs to degenerate.⁶

ASK THE Wellness DOCTOR

- 8. Eat a healthy diet** to reduce and prevent excessive weight, especially weight around the waistline that can strain lower back muscles. A diet with sufficient daily intake of calcium, phosphorus, and vitamin D helps to promote new bone growth.⁷

Want to keep your back healthy and happy? Give these back-pain prevention tips a try.

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STAYIN' ALIVE

Talking about safety isn't enough.



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