

# **STAYIN' ALIVE**

Talking about safety isn't enough.



# **HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER APRIL 2020**

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## **HIGHLIGHTS for the April 2020 Newsletter**

### **Stay Connected: Social Bonds Boost Health During Pandemic**

Stay home, stay safe. Keep your social distance. Chances are pretty good the coronavirus has closed schools and non-essential businesses in your area. But that doesn't mean you can't stay in touch with family and friends. Here are some easy ways to stay connected.

### **Try This Fast Food for Better Health**

This quick and easy snack has been a fan favorite for years. It was even the star of vaudeville shows. And it's packed with fiber, potassium, magnesium, vitamin B6, vitamin C, and more. What is it? Read on to find out.

### **The Zzz Factor for Better Health When You're Stuck at Home**

If you're stuck at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, you might be watching more TV, staying up late, and sleeping in. And that's a problem that can put your health at risk. Learn how to get a handle on the Zzz factor to boost energy, prevent disease, and improve your health.

### **Y-Axis: Train Your Brain**

What if you could remember more details about what you read, study and learn? There's a proven way to train your brain to do this. And it's not more studying. Here's what you need to know.

### **Recipe: Slow Cooker Oats**

Plan ahead, and you'll enjoy a tasty and heart-healthy breakfast with this easy-to-make recipe. Just add the steel-cut oats and other ingredients to a slow-cooker before you go to bed. Here's how:

### **Ask the Wellness Doctor**

Dr. Don Hall answers this month's Ask the Wellness Doctor question: How do you protect yourself from the coronavirus?

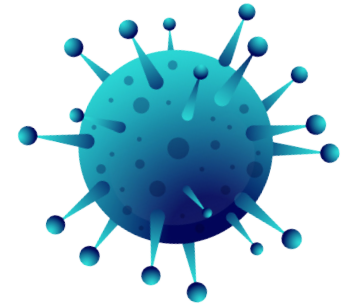
### **Health Challenge**

Take the month-long Health Challenge: Choose Heart-Healthy Habits: Improve diet and exercise for heart health.

# NEWSLETTER

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THE Y AXIS



## Train Your Brain

Want to remember more?

You've just finished reading the user manual for your computer. You've wrapped up another lesson learning to speak a foreign language. Or you've spent a chunk of time studying for a test.

Will it stick? Tomorrow will you remember what you learned?

It's no secret that repetition will help. But it's not the only way to add things to your memory bank, according to a recent study.<sup>6</sup>

Four hours after you learn something new, exercise for at least 30 minutes.

When you do this, you're more likely to remember what you learned. Study. Exercise four hours later. Boom!



### COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:  
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## Stay Connected: Social Bonds Boost Health During Pandemic

Use technology to keep working, strengthen social ties

"Hey girl, let's hang out." "Text me." "Let's do lunch when all of this is over."

Chances are pretty good you're spending a lot more time at home, than at work or with friends. As COVID-19 spreads, more people are being asked to shelter in place and maintain social distance.

But that doesn't mean you're on your own. Email, smartphones, and social media, have made it easier

than ever to stay connected. Right now, is a great time to use those tools to stay in touch.<sup>1</sup>

Why? New research shows that strong social ties can be good for your health.<sup>2</sup>

A positive social network can also help reduce stress, boost happiness, and lower your risk for chronic diseases.

So how do you improve your social ties?

**MORE**

Tips to stay connected  
<https://tinyurl.com/slzybhu>

As long as COVID-19 is spreading, here are some ways to stay connected:

- **Make a call.** Talk to a co-worker, friend or family member.
- **Send a text message.** It's a fast and easy way to share info or check up on a friend.
- **Talk face-to-face by video.** Pick a software program, social media platform, or your phone to connect in person by video. It's good for work and social conversations.
- **Use old-school email.** Phone or video chat might be faster, but old-school email is still a good way to stay connected.
- **Maintain social distance.** If you do need to visit a friend or talk to a co-worker, keep your social distance and stay at least six feet away.

When stay-at-home orders are lifted, make the effort to stay connected in person, too.

You'll be happier and healthier.®

## Try This Fast Food for Better Health

Slip this healthy fruit into your diet

In the early 1900s, vaudeville performer "Sliding" Billy Watson saw a man on the street slip on a banana peel. The man twisted and turned. He flailed his arms. He tried to stay on his feet. But he couldn't.

Watson was thoroughly amused. Not long after that, he performed the banana-peel scene for his stage show. Long before the Internet, this comedy sketch went viral. And it still gets some laughs.

You don't want to slip on a banana peel. But go ahead and slip this

fruit into your diet. Bananas are good for your health.<sup>3</sup> One banana is a good source of fiber, potassium, magnesium, vitamin B6, vitamin C, and more.

Research shows bananas can help:

- Regulate blood pressure
- Support bone health
- Reduce the risk for a stroke
- Lower heart attack risk
- Improve digestion
- Support weight management, and more



Hungry for a fast and healthy snack?

Eat a banana. It's a delicious addition to cereal, yogurt, smoothies or a fruit salad. Mash some up and make muffins, or just have one for a snack.



### Slow Cooker Oats

Plan ahead, and you'll enjoy a tasty and heart-healthy breakfast with this easy-to-make recipe. Just add the steel-cut oats and other ingredients to a slow-cooker before you go to bed.<sup>5</sup> And in the morning, it's ready to enjoy.

#### Ingredients:

3 C water

1 C steel-cut oats

Toppings of choice to sweeten: cinnamon, honey, almond milk, walnuts, peanut butter, bananas, apples.

#### Directions:

1. Combine water and steel-cut oats in slow cooker.
2. Prepare topping choice to sweeten or flavor oats.
3. Cover with lid and set to "warm."
4. Let sit overnight, or warm for about 8 hours. No need to stir until ready to eat.

## The Zzz Factor for Better Health When You're Stuck at Home

Aim for 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night

It's after midnight. You're watching infomercials, TV reruns, or one-star movies on Netflix. Maybe you're watching more COVID-19 updates. Or maybe you're awake with worry or doing stuff that can wait until tomorrow. Sound familiar?

If you're stuck at home, it's easy to get sucked into staying up late. But if that's a regular thing, it's time to take a closer look at the Zzz Factor...your sleep habits.

If you're not sleeping 7 to 9 hours a night, your health may be at risk. Lack of sleep can take a toll on your body, and it's not just fatigue. Poor sleep can also raise your risk for:<sup>4</sup>

- Accidents
- Age-related memory loss

- Certain types of cancer
- Depression and anxiety
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Weak immune system
- Weight gain

#### 7 Zzz-factor habits for a good night's sleep

Want to protect your health while COVID-19 runs its course? Aim for 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night. Here are six things you can do:

1. Keep a regular sleep schedule, even on weekends, or if you're not going in to work.
2. Avoid exercise within two hours of bedtime.
3. Avoid caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol in the late afternoon and evening.



4. Avoid going to bed on a full stomach.
5. Sleep in a dark, quiet, room with a cool, comfortable temperature.
6. Turn off all electronic devices at least an hour before bed.
7. Talk to your doctor about other ways to get adequate sleep. @

**MORE**

The benefits of slumber  
<https://tinyurl.com/y778e24t>

### Try This Fast Food for Better Health (continued from page 1)

Fun fact: The average American eats about 27 pounds of bananas a year. More than half of those are gobbled up at the breakfast table.

Daily dose: Most adults should eat 1-1/2 to 2 cups of fruit per day. But

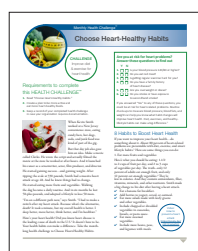
**MORE**

Health benefits of bananas  
<https://tinyurl.com/y5lqraqzlv7v3n>

only 12 percent actually eat enough fruit. Not eating enough fruit? Try a banana. Just make sure the peel ends up in the garbage or compost bin. @

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## Take the April Health Challenge!

Choose Heart-Healthy Habits: Improve diet & exercise for heart health

## Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question:

How do you protect yourself from the coronavirus?

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# WELLNESS CHALLENGE

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# Choose Heart-Healthy Habits

## CHALLENGE

Improve diet  
& exercise for  
heart health

### Are you at risk for heart problems? Answer these questions to find out

- |    | Y                        | N                        |  |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your blood pressure 120/80 or higher?           |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you eat red meat?                               |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is getting regular exercise hard for you?          |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have a family history of heart disease?     |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you overweight or obese?                       |
| 6. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you smoke or have exposure to secondhand smoke? |

If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, you could be at risk for heart-related problems. Routine check-ups to measure blood pressure, blood fats, and weight can help you know what habit changes will improve heart health. Diet, exercises, and healthy-lifestyle habits can make a big difference.<sup>2</sup>

## Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read “Choose Heart-Healthy Habits.”
2. Create a plan to be more active and eat more heart-healthy foods.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



When Kevin Smith worked at a New Jersey convenience store, eating candy bars, hot dogs, soda, and junk food was kind of part of the gig. But that day job also gave him an idea. Make a movie

called Clerks. He wrote the script and actually filmed the movie at the store he worked at after hours. And it launched his career as a screenwriter, actor, film producer, and director.

He started gaining success...and gaining weight. After tipping the scale at 330 pounds, Smith had a massive heart attack at age 48. And he knew things had to change.

He started eating more fruits and vegetables. Walking the dog became a daily routine. And in six months he lost 50-plus pounds, and adopted a lifestyle to lose 50 more.

“I’m on a different path now,” says Smith. “I had to make a switch after my heart attack. Because what’s the alternative, death? It took a minute, but my overall health is better. I sleep better, move better, think better, and I’m healthier.”

How’s your heart health? Did you know heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> It doesn’t have to be. Your health habits can make a difference. Take the month-long health challenge to Choose Heart-Healthy Habits.

## 8 Habits to Boost Heart Health

If you want to improve your heart health...do something about it. About 80 percent of heart-related problems are preventable with diet, exercise, and smart lifestyle habits.<sup>3</sup> Here are some things you can do:

1. Eat more fruits and vegetables

Here’s what you should be eating: 1-1/2 to 2 cups of fruit per day, and 2 to 3 cups of vegetables per day. The truth...only 12 percent of adults eat enough fruit, and only 12 percent eat enough vegetables.<sup>4</sup> They’re low in calories. And they contain antioxidants, fiber, vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. Smith made a big change to his diet after having a heart attack.

- ✓ Eat a banana for breakfast.
- ✓ Add berries to yogurt, cereal, or oatmeal.
- ✓ Eat more salads made with leafy greens and other vegetables.
- ✓ Include chopped or shredded vegetables in casseroles, breads, or pasta sauce.
- ✓ Eat more steamed vegetables.
- ✓ Include more beans, peas, and legumes with meals.

Video:  
How to  
prevent a heart  
attack  
<https://youtu.be/vMr1CaqwSHc>

## 8 Habits to Boost Heart Health (Continuation)

### 2. Add more whole grains to your diet

Research shows that eating fiber-rich foods like whole grains can protect your heart.<sup>5</sup> Whole grains help improve cholesterol levels and lower the risk for heart disease. Whole-grain foods can also help you manage your weight and control blood sugar levels.



- ✓ Eat more whole-grain breads, pasta, oatmeal, and rice.
- ✓ When baking, replace half of the refined flour called for in the recipe with whole-grain flour.
- ✓ Make sandwiches or toast with whole-grain bread.

### 3. Choose healthy fats

Fats found in fried foods, ice cream, cheese, milk chocolate, red meat, and many processed foods increase your risk for heart problems. On the other hand, healthy fats protect your heart.



- ✓ Use healthy vegetable oils (canola, soy, olive, etc.) for cooking and baking.
- ✓ Eat more olives, avocados, nuts, and seeds.
- ✓ Add fish to your diet 1 to 2 times a week.

### 4. Limit sodium (salt)

Most people eat too much sodium, and may not even realize it. Processed foods like pizza, frozen

Steps to improve heart health  
<http://tinyurl.com/vdvn65w>

dinners, and fast food are especially high in sodium. Too much can lead to high blood pressure and damage your heart. Aim to eat no more than 1,500 mg of sodium per day.

### 5. Don't smoke

Avoid secondhand smoke. If you smoke, quit! After you stop, your heart begins to grow stronger right away. Within as little as two years, your risk of a heart attack is nearly the same as a non-smoker.

### 6. Get regular exercise

Regular exercise is important for keeping your heart healthy. Aim to get at least 30 minutes of exercise five days a week.<sup>6</sup> Make time strength training two days a week.



- ✓ Take a 10-minute walk each morning and afternoon.
- ✓ Go to the gym. Try jogging or running. Or take a group exercise class.
- ✓ Yard work and vigorous house cleaning counts as exercise too.

### 7. Manage stress in healthy ways

Studies show that people with high stress levels at work or home have higher rates of heart disease. Learning to manage stress in healthy ways is good for your heart.<sup>7</sup>

- ✓ Limit your stress load. Don't over commit. Learn to say "No" and "I need more help."

Are you at risk for heart disease?  
<https://tinyurl.com/s2s7skd>

- ✓ Get adequate rest daily.
- ✓ Make time to exercise, relax, and do fun things.
- ✓ Don't use alcohol or other addictive substances to manage stress.
- ✓ Develop a good support system. Talking with family members, friends, or co-workers about stress in your life can help.

### 8. Get regular checkups

Visit your doctor at least once a year for a check-up. Preventive care and exams can make a difference. Just ask Kevin Smith.

Want to keep your heart healthy for years to come? Now is always the best time to start.

### Ticker-Data About Heart Health



Ready to learn a little more about your heart to keep it healthy? Check out this ticker data:

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 100,000     | Average number of times heart beats per day  |
| 6           | Number of quarts of blood the heart pumps through the body every 20 seconds                                  |
| 2.5 billion | Average number of beats the heart makes in a lifetime  |
| 30%         | Average reduction in heart disease risk from eating more plant-based foods, less red meat and more olive oil |
| 500,000     | Average number of heart bypass surgeries doctors perform every year  |
| 647,457     | Number of people who die from heart disease each year  |

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# Choose Heart-Healthy Habits



## CHALLENGE

Improve diet & exercise for heart health

### Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of days you make heart-healthy choices.
3. Use the calendar to record the actions and choices you make to help eating more vegetables become a regular part of your life.
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you made heart-healthy choices. You must do this on at least 22 days this month to complete this challenge. 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<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ |  |
| HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ | HC<br>[ ]<br>ex. min. _____ |  |
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\_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I made heart-healthy choices  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity



### Other wellness projects completed this month:

-----  
 -----

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# ASK THE DOCTOR

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## Q. How do you protect yourself from the coronavirus?

A. It's not that different from protecting yourself from the flu or common cold.

Right now the coronavirus (COVID-19) is a global pandemic.<sup>1</sup> It's serious. Many schools and businesses are closed to prevent community spread. You can get the virus from a single droplet when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or from contaminated surfaces. And right now, there is no vaccine.

But it's not like the science-fiction thriller *Contagion*, starring Matt Damon and Gwyneth Paltrow.

Why? Most people who get COVID-19 will experience mild flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, and shortness of breath). And most will recover in a few weeks.

However, COVID-19 may cause serious health problems for older adults. You're also at risk if you have heart disease, diabetes, or other chronic conditions.

So how do you protect yourself from COVID-19? Here's how:<sup>2</sup>

**1. Keep your distance.** Stay home if you can. It's the best way to prevent community spread. You'll limit your chances of getting sick. And if you have COVID-19 (you can be contagious for 2 to 14 days without any symptoms), you'll avoid spreading the virus. If you have to be around people, try to stay at least six feet away. Follow all guidelines in your community to shelter in place and avoid large gatherings.



## 5 Ways to Stay Healthy

**2. Wash your hands.**<sup>3</sup> Rinse your hands with water. Lather up with soap. Scrub palms, between the fingers, under fingernails, and the backs of hands for 20 seconds. Rinse, and dry off with a clean towel, paper towel, or air dry. If you don't have access to soap and water, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

**3. Cover it.** If you cough or sneeze, cover it with a tissue or use your elbow. Throw away used tissues. Wash your hands afterwards. If you have COVID-19, wear a mask anytime you're around other people, especially at home.

**4. Disinfect hard surfaces.** Research shows the coronavirus can last 2 to 3 days on hard surfaces.<sup>4</sup> Clean dirty surfaces with soap and water first. Then use a disinfectant, alcohol, or bleach solution to wipe down faucets, toilets, sinks, keyboards, phones, desks, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, toys, steering wheel, etc.

**5. If you get sick...** call your doctor or healthcare provider first. In most cases, people with COVID-19 can recover at home. Making a trip to the hospital, urgent care, or doctor's office only increases the chance of

## ASK THE Wellness DOCTOR

community spread. If you feel worse or think it's an emergency, call 911 or seek medical care.

Healthy lifestyle habits can also help you fight the flu, common cold, and viruses. Eat more fruits and vegetables, especially citrus fruits and drinks. Drink plenty of water. Get 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. Avoid staying up late or working to exhaustion. Manage stress in healthy ways. And get at least 30 minutes of exercise a day. You'll feel better. And you'll recover faster if you do get sick.

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# STAYIN' ALIVE

Talking about safety isn't enough.



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