



VIP: Healthy VIEWS

SUMMER 2017

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Be sure to talk with your doctor about problems with falling, walking, or balancing. He or she can suggest low-impact forms of exercise to help.

Home Safe Home: Protecting Older Adults

Keeping a spouse, parent, or other older adult safe at home is difficult. This is true whether the loved one is living with you or alone. But taking action to keep him or her from harm can help you both rest easy.

Everyday Steps

Every year, one-third of American adults fall, which can result in a loss of independence and serious injuries. The majority of falls happen at home, and many are preventable. Here are some ways to lower your loved one's risk of falling:

- Clear the floor from clutter or cords.
- Remove loose rugs or attach them to the floor with double-sided tape.
- Install handrails on both sides of the stairs.
- Place grab bars in the tub or shower and next to the toilet.
- Change cabinet doorknobs so they are easier to reach.

High-Tech Help

High-tech tools can help people with memory loss and dementia stay safely in their home. Here are a few examples:

- **MedicAlert + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return.** This is a 24-hour emergency response system for people who wander or have a medical emergency. Visit www.alz.org and search for "MedicAlert."
- **Alzheimer's Association Comfort Zone.** This service finds a person's location. Families can use it to keep track of their loved ones. Users can also get information on their telephone if they don't have an internet connection. Visit www.alz.org and search for "comfort zone."

Product Evaluation

There are many tools to keep your loved one safe. For advice, schedule an in-home visit with an occupational therapist.

Why You Struggle to Breathe—And What to Do About It

Shortness of breath is one of the main symptoms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Some people may have a hard time breathing when they exercise. What causes this symptom? Doctors refer to it as hyperinflation. Hyperinflation means that you have too much air left in your lungs after you breathe out. As a result, you're not able to take a full breath in.

Health Risks of Shallow Breathing

Hyperinflation causes many health risks, including early death.

Studies show that hyperinflation is one of the main reasons people with COPD have trouble exercising. Not getting enough physical activity is linked to cardiovascular disease, a complication of COPD.

Help Your Lungs Work Better

There are a few steps you can take to help your lungs breathe easier:

- **Medication.** Use a bronchodilator during exercise. The medicine makes it easier to breathe in and out.
- **Get more exercise.** Exercise reduces the amount of oxygen you need during a workout. In other words, you can work out at the same pace, but breathing will be easier.
- **Pursed-lip breathing.** Practice pursed-lip breathing to help more air flow out when you exhale. Take a deep breath. Then, breathe out through your mouth with your lips pursed.

Talk with your doctor to learn ways you can breathe easier and be more active.

Is Your Medicine Covered?

Your health plan has a list of covered drugs called the formulary, or “drug list” for short. It tells you if there are any rules that restrict coverage for your drugs. You can search the drug list at www.keystonevipchoice.com/apps/formulary/2017.aspx.

Caregivers, Respite Can Help You Recharge

Everyone needs time to relax—especially family caregivers.

The demands of caregiving can cause emotional and physical stress. That is where respite can help. Respite is a service that gives the caregiver time to meet his or her own needs. This benefits both the caregiver and the care recipient.

Respite Arrangements

There are many different types of respite arrangements. Respite can be provided in the home or outside of the home. It can be organized through a formal program or through an informal support network made up of other family members, friends, and volunteers from the community.

Respite may be scheduled regularly or on an as-needed or emergency basis. The length of the respite period can also vary, from a few hours to a few days. Many families who are coping with an ongoing illness rely on many respite arrangements to meet their needs.

Programs that Help

Home health agencies and nonmedical home care (companion) agencies offer in-home respite services. You can also consider hiring a respite caregiver on your own. Outside of the home, there are adult day service programs. They provide planned activities along with health support.

You can get respite care for a longer period of time like overnight or for a few days. When the care recipient requires a great deal of assistance or skilled care, a short-term stay program can help. This program is available through a local hospital, long-term care facility, or assisted-living facility.

Lose the Stress of Bladder Trouble and Regain Your Life

You may think that leaking urine is embarrassing or a part of getting older.

But doctors call it urinary incontinence. Treatment can almost always help relieve it.

How Urine Slips Away

Normally, your bladder muscles contract and relax to help you relieve yourself. First, they tense up to send liquid waste into the urethra. Then, they loosen to let urine flow out.

Bladder problems can cause urine to leak when you don't intend it. Causes of these problems include:

- Infections
- Certain medications
- Nerve damage
- A medical problem that makes it hard for you to reach the toilet in time
- A blockage to your urethra, caused by urinary stones, tumors, or an enlarged prostate in men

No matter what the cause is, incontinence can cause sleeping problems and urinary tract infections, and it can keep you from the activities you enjoy.

Reclaim Bladder Control

If you've had leakage problems but haven't talked with your doctor, make an appointment.

He or she will ask questions, examine you, and do lab tests to find the cause of your troubles.

Treatment for incontinence depends on the cause. Sometimes, you can get relief by changing prescriptions or cutting back on caffeine. Other options include:

- Exercises to strengthen the muscles around your bladder
- Losing weight
- Bladder training, such as timed bathroom breaks
- Devices that use electric or magnetic forces to stimulate nerves
- Medications
- Surgery, in severe cases



Infection and Incontinence: Double the Trouble

Which came first: leaking urine or having a urinary tract infection (UTI)? It could be either. An infection in your urinary tract can cause bladder control problems. And not treating incontinence can spread bacteria that can start an infection.

Stop this cycle before it starts by seeing your doctor at the first sign of a UTI. Watch for these symptoms:

- A strong, frequent urge to urinate
- Pain and burning when you do go
- Urine that's cloudy, dark, bloody, or foul-smelling
- Pain in your back or sides

Your doctor will likely test a sample of your urine for infection. If it comes back positive, antibiotics can kill the bacteria and ease the burn.

The Top 3 Health Risks in Men— And How to Avoid Them

Think of your four closest male friends or family members. Now think of this: Statistically, one of them will die of heart disease. Another will die of cancer. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these two health problems are responsible for nearly half of deaths among men.

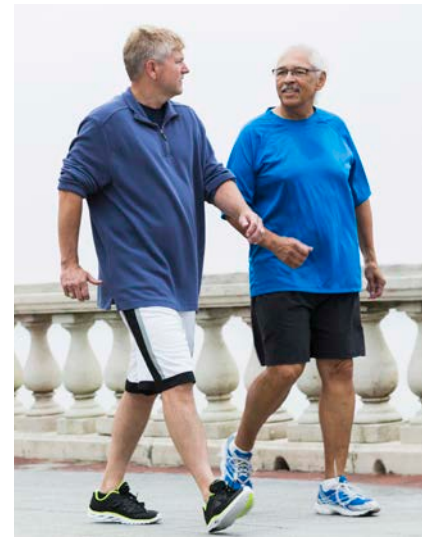
The good news: Some types of exercise can help prevent these health threats in both men and women. Here's how.

To ward off heart disease: *Fit in small amounts of exercise all day.*

Aerobic exercise, such as walking or biking, strengthens your heart and lowers your blood pressure. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise on most days of the week. But you don't have to do it all at once. Three 10-minute walks can be as effective as one 30-minute walk at lowering blood pressure.

To guard against cancer: *Exercise as much as you can.*

Exercise may help prevent some types of cancer. Get at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise throughout the week. For additional cancer protection, aim for 300 minutes of activity per week. If that's too much, try to do what you can. Every additional 15 minutes of activity a day decreases your risk of dying from cancer by 1 percent, according to research.

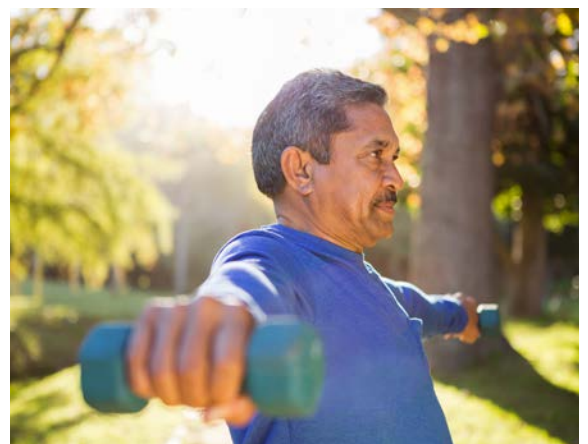


To prevent falls: *Improve your balance.*

Falls are the third most common cause of death among men. Exercise programs that include balance training could prevent up to 42 percent of falls. Consider taking a class in tai chi, a martial art that helps improve balance and coordination. Or try this balance move: Stand behind a sturdy chair. Holding the back of the chair, raise up onto your toes. Pause for one second. Lower your heels to the floor. Repeat 10 to 15 times about twice a week.

Mark Your Calendars!

Men and women, make a note on your calendar that new flu vaccines will be available in August. When you get your flu shot, talk with your doctor about getting vaccinated against pneumonia, too.



Heading Home After a Hospital Stay? Follow These Tips

You're probably excited to go home after a stay in the hospital. It's comforting to sleep in your own bed and eat a meal with your family. But don't rush out of the hospital too fast. It's important to understand your treatment plan before you leave. Otherwise, you may find yourself back in the hospital.

A recent study found that more than 35 percent of hospital readmissions could be avoided. Here's what you need to know before leaving the hospital.

Understand Your Treatment Plan

Before you leave the hospital, your doctor will give you a discharge summary. Read it over carefully when you receive it. The instructions may include:

- What type of exercise you should and shouldn't do.
- How to change your bandages.
- Any special equipment you might need.

Ask questions if you don't understand the directions.



Get Home Safe and Sound

It can help to have a friend or family member with you to remember what the doctor tells you. Ask the doctor who you should call if you have questions once you're home, and write down the phone number.

It's tempting to rush out of the hospital. But taking these steps before you leave can help you recover well—and in the comfort of your own home.

CUT AND SAVE 

Must-Know Medication Info

Many readmissions are due to medication misunderstandings. Your doctor or nurse will review your medicines with you before you head home. For each medicine, make sure you write down:

Name of medicine: _____

The dose of the medicine is (for example, 200 mg): _____

This medicine is used for/to treat my: _____

I need to take this medicine at (time of day): _____

Do I need to take this medicine with food? Yes or No

Common side effects are: _____

How have my medicines changed since before I came to the hospital? _____

If you're not sure about any of the information, ask questions.

How to Stay Safely Hydrated This Summer

It's summer, which means time for outdoor fun. It's also the time of year when it's easy to become dehydrated. Warmer temperatures, higher humidity, and being more active cause you to sweat more. Your body needs to replace fluids throughout the day to stay in balance.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services says that most people get enough water through normal drinking behavior and through the water in foods such as soups, fruits, and vegetables. But you need to drink more when it gets warmer outside.

Think Beyond the Tap

However, drinking too much water can make it harder for your heart to pump. Everyone should drink at least 8 8-ounce glasses of water each day, or 64 ounces. Many doctors advise heart failure patients to stick to 8 cups, but people who do not have heart failure can usually have more.

If your doctor recommends that you reduce liquids, there are simple ways to dodge thirst without exceeding your drink limit:

- Space your fluid intake throughout the day. When you drink, take small sips. Water is a good choice for staying hydrated—and it's calorie-free. For more flavor, add a slice of lemon or flavored seltzer.
- Mark the amount of liquid you are limited to each day on an



Some fruits and vegetables have a high water content. Eating one medium orange or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of watermelon is the same as drinking $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water.

empty container. As you drink fluids, put an equal amount of water into the container until you reach the limit. This helps you know when to stop drinking for that day.

- Find other ways to relieve thirst. Try chewing gum, sucking on sugar-free hard candy, rinsing your mouth with water, or sucking on ice chips (not cubes). Also, you can nibble on frozen grapes, blueberries, or strawberries, or a washcloth soaked in ice-cold water.

Things to Cut, Limit

Stay hydrated this summer with these three tips:

- **Limit sodium.** Sodium causes your body to retain fluid, which can cause swelling and weight gain.
- **Avoid milk or ice cream products.** These dairy products can increase thirst.
- **Pass on alcohol and caffeine.** Alcohol can decrease the heart's ability to contract properly, and caffeine can put more stress on the heart.



Quiz: Produce Power

Fruit is nature's candy, but did you know that fruit is nature's medicine, too?

That's right—your fruit salad can help ease swelling and pain caused by inflammation. Inflammation happens when your immune system responds to things it thinks could be harmful, like chemicals, viruses, bacteria, or wounds. Certain conditions, like arthritis and dermatitis, can cause inflammation, too. Test your produce knowledge and learn which fruits you may want to add to your summertime diet:

- Adding which fruit to your diet can help prevent chronic conditions like heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes?
 - Oranges
 - Raspberries
 - Peaches
 - Mangoes
- Which fruit has been proven to help relieve joint pain and gout symptoms?
 - Tart cherries
 - Grapefruit
 - Kiwi
 - Grapes
- Which summer treat prevents bone loss?
 - Apricots
 - Dried plums
 - Nectarines
 - Apples



Vegetable Pasta Salad

Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked orzo pasta
- 1 cup lightly steamed asparagus, cut the same size as the pasta
- ½ cup chopped carrots
- ½ cup sliced green onions
- ½ cup chopped yellow summer squash
- 1 cup chopped fresh spinach
- 1 cup small cherry tomatoes
- ¼ cup low-fat vinaigrette salad dressing
- 2 tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ tsp. salt

Directions

- Combine the pasta, asparagus, carrots, green onions, squash, spinach, tomatoes, dressing, Parmesan cheese, and salt in a large bowl.
- Toss to coat with the dressing and Parmesan cheese.
- Serve with grilled chicken or fish at a barbecue or picnic.

Per serving

Serves 4; serving size is 1¼ cup
Each serving provides: 114 calories, 2 g total fat (1 g saturated fat), 344 mg sodium, 3 g fiber.

ANSWERS

B: Raspberries have been shown to reduce inflammation throughout the body.

A: Tart cherries are high in anthocyanin, which helps ease gout symptoms and joint pain.

B: Dried plums have a special strength that gives them antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.





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