



Happy 2018! Welcome to a new and exciting year of Living Healthy. It's that time of year again, the time when you start hearing coughing and sneezing throughout the office. In this issue, we provide a few tips on preventing the flu, reducing your risk of heart disease, and how losing sleep can affect you.

There is also a puzzle and a healthy recipe for you to enjoy. . Enjoy this first issue and welcome to a year of well-being.

Brittany Coles, MPH

Preventing the Flu

It's that time of year again, the time when you start hearing coughing and sneezing throughout the office and a box of tissues is placed conveniently near your computer keyboard.



The cold and flu season typically runs from November – April. It is typically spread when people are indoors and cold and flu viruses are often passed along from person to person and surface to surface in the workplace.

According to the CDC, people are most contagious during the first 2-3 days of contracting a cold and almost immediately and for about 5 days thereafter after being infected with the flu – even before symptoms develop. However, there are many actions you can take to prevent the spread of cold and flu viruses at work.

1. Avoid close contact.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

2. Stay home when you are sick.

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading your illness to others.

3. Cover your mouth and nose.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

4. Clean your hands.

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

6. Practice other good health habits.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm>

<https://www.simmons.edu/~media/Simmons/About/Center-for-Hygiene-and-Health/Documents/Tips-for-Preventing-Cold-and-Flu-in-the-Workplace>

How Does Exercise Help Diabetes?

“How Does Exercise Help Diabetes?” is one of the most common questions among diabetic patients. Exercise is one of the best ways to improve your overall health. Research has repeatedly shown that it can help diabetics bring their diabetes under control through a variety of body mechanisms. There is also a deep connection between exercise and Type 2 diabetes prevention.

Click the image below to watch our interview with Randy Simpson, fitness expert at the Rocky Mount YMCA, and learn more about how exercise can help manage diabetes.



<https://www.sepalika.com/type-2-diabetes/how-does-exercise-help-diabetes/>

**IT'S NEVER
TOO EARLY
OR
TOO LATE
TO WORK
TOWARDS BEING THE
HEALTHIEST
YOU**

Heart Disease– Reduce Your Risk

We hear a lot of advice about our health: lose weight! Exercise! Watch your cholesterol!

While most of us have good intentions about those things, it can be easy to forget why they are so important in the first place: it's all about our hearts. February is American Heart Month, a good time to take a look at how lifestyles affect heart health and why a few changes can improve the heart's health and possibly even extend our lives.



Heart disease remains the number one cause of death in the United States, for both men and women. More than one in four deaths each year is attributable to cardiovascular disease.

Heart disease is also the leading cause of disability in the United States, dramatically reducing the quality of life for millions each

year. And it's expensive: the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) calculates the total tab for heart disease in the United States is \$200 billion annually. This includes the cost of health services and medications, as well as lost productivity. While some heart disease is caused by genetic factors, much of its incidence can be prevented – or at least delayed until later in life – with preventative measures and sound lifestyle choices.

Reduce Your Risk

There are several factors that impact our risk of developing heart disease. Some of the most important include blood sugar, cholesterol, blood pressure, weight, diet, exercise, stress and whether or not we smoke. Here's a look at some major factors that impact heart health:

Keep blood sugar in check

Diabetes is a major risk factor for heart disease and



a cause of other serious health problems. Your doctor can check your blood sugar level with a simple blood test, and there are several things that can be done to lower it if it's too high. Some foods should be avoided or eaten only in moderation. This includes certain carbohydrates, such as white flour products like bread and pasta, as well as white rice. Sugary drinks, including soda and fruit drinks, can also cause blood sugar levels to spike. Getting regular exercise and remaining hydrated are important keys to keeping blood sugar levels in check.

Manage cholesterol

Cholesterol is a waxy, naturally-occurring substance in our bodies. Its purpose is to create hormones and substances that aid the digestive process. While the human body naturally produces all the cholesterol it needs, we consume additional cholesterol through food, such as meat, dairy, eggs and trans-fat. Cholesterol is transported through the bloodstream by lipoproteins. There

are two types of lipoproteins, low-density (LDL) and high-density (HDL). These are often short-handed when people say “bad cholesterol” and “good cholesterol” – LDL levels that are too high can be unhealthy, while low HDL levels are also unhealthy.

The higher a person's LDL cholesterol, the greater the risk of developing heart disease. That's because LDL cholesterol contributes to the buildup of plaque in the arteries and can lead to CAD.

Conversely, HDL is considered “good cholesterol” – the higher it is, the better. HDL cholesterol transports cholesterol and fat through the blood and to the liver so they can be eliminated from the body.

It's important to get a lipid screening every five years – or more frequently, if your physician recommends it – to check your cholesterol levels. This simple blood test will measure cholesterol and triglycerides, a type of fat



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How Losing Sleep Affects Your Mind and Body

If you've been skimping on sleep to get more done during your waking hours, you may be fooling yourself if you think you're getting away with it.



The truth is, insufficient shut-eye can compromise the way that you feel and function around the clock, often in sneaky ways. After all,

good-quality sleep provides your mind and body with the opportunity for renewal and rejuvenation, which can help enhance your everyday performance. Here's a head-to-toe look at the reality of what happens when you cheat on sleep.

Your mind won't function optimally. Sleep is critical for the formation and consolidation of memories—and for your ability to retrieve them while you're awake. Plus, when you're tired, it's more difficult to learn something new or to pay attention to whatever it is you should be attending to. These deficits can compromise your creativity, your ability to make decisions or solve problems, and your work performance.

Your mood can take a nosedive. Getting enough shut-eye helps with mood and emotion

regulation, so you might feel cranky, irritable, or emotionally out of sorts if you don't snooze enough. What's more, you could become more reactive to stress than usual.

Your reaction time may suffer. Believe it or not, going just 19 hours without sleep can compromise your speed and accuracy on tests of judgment and motor reaction time as much as if you were legally drunk. Naturally, this can increase your risk of having a car accident, as well as performing badly at other tasks involving quick thinking and coordination.

You can end up looking bad.

Literally! Consistently skimping on sleep can lead to premature wrinkling and sagging of your skin, partly because cortisol (a stress hormone that's released when you're sleep-deprived) can break down collagen, which keeps your skin smooth. You can also feel colder than usual because sleep is essential for body temperature regulation.



Your heart can suffer. Sleeping fewer than six hours a night can increase your risk of developing

high blood pressure or worsen high blood pressure if you already have it. Plus, over time, skimping on sleep can increase your odds of developing cardiovascular disease.

Your appetite can go into overdrive. When you don't get enough sleep, you may feel hungrier than usual and crave high-fat, high-carbohydrate foods, in particular. Your body's fullness (satiety) signals also get thrown out of whack. These effects can lead to unwanted weight gain.

Your immune system will take a hit. When you're tired and even moderately sleep-deprived, your immune function is compromised. This can leave you vulnerable to catching colds, the flu, and other infectious illnesses—and make it harder to recover from infections and heal from wounds.



<https://sleep.org/articles/how-losing-sleep-affects-your-body-mind/>



It Is Never Too Late

Unscramble the tiles to reveal a message.

A Y S H A R V E D O U P A L W U W Y O
 I L L B E S L A T O W , S T Y O L A N Y O
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The first 3 people to send an email with the hidden message revealed will win a gift card!!



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The Surprising Benefits of Strength Training

The benefits of strength training go beyond toned muscles and a sleek physique. In fact, adding this form of exercise into your regular fitness routing can have a profound impact into all areas of your life. For example, one study published in the Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology found that those who performed resistance training experienced significantly greater self-esteem and perceived strength over four weeks than those who did not.

Weight training can also ultimately improve your ability to perform daily activities (maintaining proper posture, carrying groceries, doing housework, playing with kids, etc.). Additionally, strength training has been proven to help adults lose weight and keep it off in the long haul.

Most experts recommend you aim for a few 10-15 minute sessions of weight training a week. This can include using your own body weight (i.e., push-ups, pull-ups) or using free weights, weight machines or resistance bands.

Here are some guidelines to follow:

Start slow. Start with just one set of 5-10 reps and then gradually work your way up to multiple sets. You definitely don't want to overdo it, as this can increase your chance of injury.

Start light, if you're using too much weight, it will increase your chance of injury. You do, however want to use enough weight to challenge your muscles. So, start light and ensure you're using proper form. You should be able to easily perform reps until you get to the last few (you want to feel slightly taxed when you hit the last reps). That's a good indicator you've selected the right weight.

Rest and recover. You want to give your muscles time to repair and recover. Wait a few days before you train the same muscle group again.



Welcoa Well-Inspired

Heart Disease– Reduce Your Risk *continued*

in the blood. Triglycerides can also be harmful to cardiovascular health if they are too high.

Healthy blood pressure

Elevated blood pressure can damage the arteries over time. It also causes the heart to work harder to pump blood, causing extra strain and possible damage to the heart. The root cause of high blood pressure is usually unknown, as it is often a condition that develops gradually as people age. However, there are known risk factors that contribute to high blood pressure, including too much salt and too little potassium in a diet. As with cholesterol, if diet and exercise are insufficient to bring blood pressure into a normal range, your physician may prescribe medication.



Healthy weight

Maintaining a healthy weight is one of the most important things we can do for heart health and our overall well-being. People who are overweight or obese are at greater risk for heart disease and a host of related problems, including diabetes, hypertension and high cholesterol. Carrying around excess weight also makes the heart work harder to pump blood throughout the body and causes strain on the

joints, which in turn can make it more difficult to get exercise.

Eating well

In general, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, unsalted nuts, lean meat and fish are heart-friendly foods that promote a healthy body weight and good overall health.

Foods that should be avoided or eaten only in moderation include fatty meats, processed meats (such as hot dogs), fried foods and food with high



amounts of salt or sugar. What we drink also impacts our weight and other aspects of our health. Sugary drinks, such as soft drinks and energy drinks, also up your calorie intake while providing little or no nutrition. And while fruit is

good for you, fruit juices are high in sugar and calories and provide none of the healthy fiber that fruit does.

It's important to also understand how much to eat. For example, grilled salmon is a healthy food – it provides omega 3 fats that help to manage cholesterol and triglycerides and is a good source of protein. That said, a 16-ounce piece of salmon is not good for you, at least not in one meal. Meat and fish portions should be around 4 ounces per serving. Pasta – the whole grain variety – should be limited to 1 cup, dry.

Get moving

Exercise helps the heart in two really important ways. Walking, bicycling, running and swimming cause the heart rate to rise. As the heart beats faster to pump blood, the heart muscle is strengthened. When you hear someone talk about doing “cardio” exercise, that's why: the heart is getting a workout.

Exercise, of course, is also the second half of the weight equation. We have to get moving to burn more calories than we consume.



De-stress yourself

One of the heart health variables that we probably don't pay enough attention to is stress. Stress wears us down mentally and physically and can put undue strain on the heart over time. Getting an adequate amount of sleep each night will help manage stress. Regular exercise is an effective way to mitigate stress and clear the mind. It's also important to make time for yourself doing what you enjoy – reading, working in the garden, playing golf or some other activity.

<http://www.txhealthcare.com/health-news/reduce-your-risk-american-heart-month-2018/100/>

Butternut Squash and Carrot Soup

This elegant and smooth squash soup recipe gives you more than your daily quota for vitamin A in just one bowl!



Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 3 cups peeled, diced butternut squash (about 1 small squash)
- 2 cups thinly sliced carrots (4 medium carrots)
- 3/4 cup thinly sliced leeks or chopped onion
- 2 (14.5 oz) cans reduce-sodium chicken broth
- 1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 cup regular or fat-free half-and-half or light cream

Directions

In a large saucepan over medium heat melt butter or margarine. Add squash, carrots, and leeks or onion to pan. Cook, covered, for 8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add broth. Bring to a boil; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, for 25 minutes or until vegetables are very tender.

Place 1/3 of the squash mixture in a blender container. Cover; Blend until almost smooth. Repeat with remaining mixture. Return mixture to saucepan. Add white pepper and nutmeg. Bring just to boiling. Add half-and-half or light cream. Heat through. Ladle into soup bowls.