

OnTrack to Wellness

Brought to You by the NYC Transit HR Benefits Wellness Team

February 2019

The Health Promotion and Wellness Newsletter.

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Slash the Salt

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

When you hear the words *salt* and *sodium*, you may immediately think about the salt shaker on your table. Maybe you use it before your meal to enhance the flavor of your food, or perhaps you add a dash while cooking. It may surprise you to learn that just 11% of your sodium intake comes from the salt you cook with or add at the table.

Most of the sodium Americans consume (71%) comes from ultra-processed, packaged and restaurant food. Salt is in pizza, bread, burgers, deli meat, chips, pretzels, pickles and condiments, to name a few. These foods are high in sodium because it's used in so many ways — to prevent spoilage, prohibit growth of pathogens, improve appearance and enhance flavor or texture.

If you've been told to cut back on salt for health reasons, such as salt-sensitive hypertension or kidney disease, it's not just about avoiding the salt shaker. Your best bet is to eat fewer ultra-processed foods.

You don't need to banish salt from your diet, since at least 1,500 mg sodium per day is required for normal body functioning. The trouble is, many people get too much (about 3,400 mg per day).

You can still cook with salt, but try to cut back on using very salty sauces and dressings, such as soy or barbecue sauce. Instead, boost flavor with citrus fruits, such as lemon or lime; herbs, such as basil, oregano and rosemary; spices, such as cumin, cinnamon and coriander; or aromatics, including garlic, onion and ginger.



Checklist: Your Heart's Must-Haves



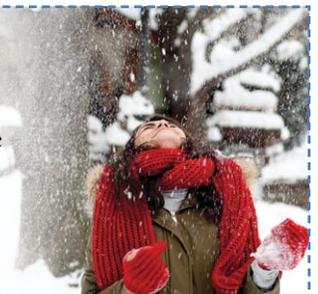
What are the key elements that can help protect your heart? Check the following habits that you typically observe or hope to develop for heart health. Then start watching your progress.

- Waistline:** I keep my waist circumference below 35 inches (for women) or below 40 inches (for men). Excess belly fat raises heart disease risk.
- Power moves:** I stay physically active and get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise weekly. Examples: routine brisk walks, a dance class or cardio machine workouts.
- Numbers game:** I know my blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose and triglyceride levels through regular checks by my health care provider. Maintaining optimal levels is critical to heart health.
- Positive food:** I enjoy a diet rich in fresh produce, whole grains and lean protein sources (fish, beans, lean meats) to help fight arterial disease and unwanted weight gain.
- Yes for nutrition:** I rarely eat refined grains or processed foods. These products (e.g., low-fiber, high-sugar foods and preserved meats) remove many healthful components in the original food sources.
- I don't smoke.** Smoking significantly raises the risk of heart disease and diabetes by damaging the blood vessels and raising blood pressure and heart rate.
- I laugh a lot.** It feels good and relieves stress and depression. Laughter helps lower stress hormones and artery inflammation and increase HDL (good) cholesterol, says the American Heart Association.

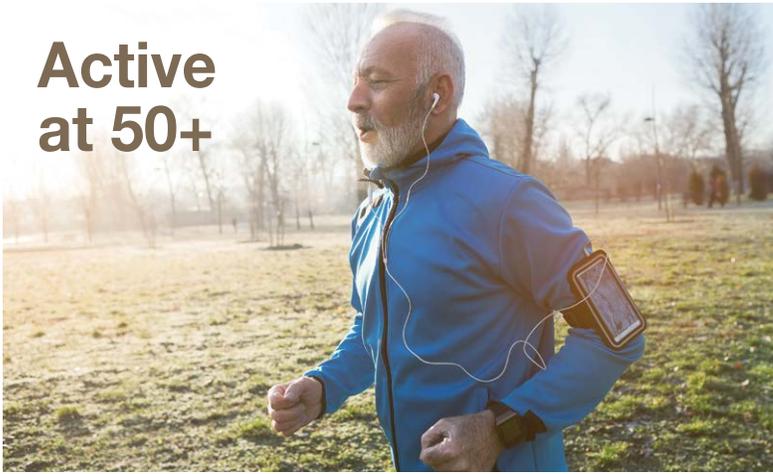
It's never too late to be heart smart for you and your family.

February 1 is Wear Red Day honoring women's heart health.

Heart disease kills more women than all forms of cancer combined. Most women who die suddenly from heart disease will have no prior symptoms. But 80% of cardiac events may be prevented with health education and lifestyle changes to manage your vital signs.



Active at 50+



We all know people who seem younger than their years. Chances are they do more, move more and have more energy than others the same age. Science has shown that the more physically active we are throughout life the less biological aging takes place in our bodies.

Benefits: Exercising and staying physically active helps protect your heart, muscle strength, joint flexibility and mental function. Plus, exercise helps control weight and keeps your body youthful. Many studies have shown that we may live longer when we stay active.

Exercise Guidelines for Adults:

To protect longevity, your **weekly** exercise target should be at least:

- 1 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (e.g., brisk walking).
- 2 Or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (e.g., cross training).
- 3 Or a combination of both.
- 4 And 2 or 3 muscle-strengthening workouts.

(Children and teens should do at **least 60 minutes** of physical activity daily.)

People who followed these exercise guidelines — starting as late as age 60 — lowered their risk of heart failure by 12% to 31% based on a long-running study reported in *Circulation* this year.

Ask yourself: Do you hope for good health with each passing decade? As much as possible, get up, get moving and enjoy living.

Save a Life With CPR

If you see another adult suddenly collapse, you can save that person's life by immediately performing **hands-only** (no breaths) cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). This method uses only compressions to perform CPR. People who receive hands-only CPR are twice as likely to survive as those who do not.

Here's how to do hands-only CPR:*

1. **Call 9-1-1.** (If others are with you, have 1 of them call while you begin chest compressions.) You will be asked to place the phone on speaker so the emergency dispatcher can help you and any other bystanders check the person's breathing, get the precise location and provide instructions, including:
2. **Kneeling** close to the person's chest, place the heel of 1 hand over the other in the middle of the chest.
3. **Extend** your arms completely and push down hard at a 90-degree angle (that's 1 compression).
4. **After** the push, completely release your pressure.
5. **Aim** for 100 or more compressions per minute. When you tire, try to switch with someone nearby (if possible) to get a break.

***Note:** Experts caution that for drowning victims or people deprived of oxygen, rescue breaths are still necessary.



It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop. — Confucius

Go compost.

Food scraps and yard waste account for 30% of our garbage, but we can compost it instead. Consider composting at home.

Start with a bin. Then research the basics of layering greens (high nitrogen), such as vegetable scraps and coffee grounds, and browns (high carbon), such as dry leaves, sawdust and wood chips, in the bin. The benefits? Reduce food waste and use the compost as mulch in your garden.



Q: Cautions for OTC medications?

A: Many people assume over-the-counter medications are safe, but they can have side effects or interactions. This is especially true when taking multiple OTC meds or using them with prescription drugs.

Read the drug label. Check the ingredients, uses and warnings such as not to mix with alcohol. Carefully follow product directions.

Avoid multiple sources. Make sure you're not getting the same drug from more than 1 product. For instance, acetaminophen commonly occurs in painkillers and cold or flu remedies. You could easily get too much if you take more than 1 acetaminophen product at the same time. The same is true for all other active ingredients such as decongestants.

If you have any medication questions, ask your health care provider or pharmacist. Have your provider monitor all of your prescription and OTC medicines. — Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP



The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, American Heart Association's Life's Simple 7, is at personalbest.com/extras/19V2tools.

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Safety Around the Clock. 2.2019

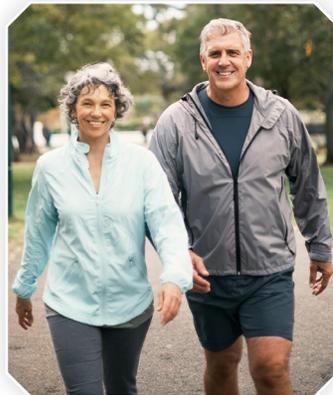


February is American Heart Month.

EXERCISE Caution

Approximately 600,000 Americans die from heart disease annually, according to the American Heart Association. While exercise is 1 way to combat this deadly disease, proceed with caution if you've been inactive, have recently experienced a heart attack or heart problem or have these heart disease risk factors:

- ✓ Sedentary lifestyle.
- ✓ Obesity.
- ✓ Diet high in saturated fat.
- ✓ Type 2 diabetes.
- ✓ High blood pressure or hypertension.
- ✓ Unhealthy cholesterol.
- ✓ Smoking.
- ✓ Family history of heart disease.



To be safe:

- **See** your health care provider before beginning an exercise routine or playing a new sport.
- **Warm** up your muscles with low-intensity activities (such as walking) for 5 to 10 minutes before any exercise. Stretch gently at the end of physical activity to reduce strain.
- **Pace** yourself. Start slowly and don't do too much your first few times. And, if your regular workout gets interrupted for a few days, start back slowly.
- **Don't** exercise when it's too hot, humid or too cold outside.
- **Stay** hydrated.
- **Know** the signs of a heart attack: tightness, pressure or pain in chest; shortness of breath; dizziness or lightheadedness; unusual heart rhythms (palpitating, skipping); unusual sweating; discomfort in arms, back, neck, jaw or stomach or discomfort radiating from 1 body part to another, such as from your chest to your shoulder.
Call 911 within the first 5 minutes after your symptoms begin — time is critical.



Learn more about exercise and heart disease risks at heart.org.

SAFETY CORNER

Avoid Tech Support SCAMS

"Virus detected! Click here or call this number for a free security scan and repair." If you've received a message like this on your device, the Federal Trade Commission advises you to ignore it.



It's a tech support scam. Cyber thieves use this ruse to get your money or even get you to download malicious software that can steal your personal information. Warning: Some of these companies can look legitimate by using company logos and websites that closely resemble the actual company support page.

If you suspect something is wrong with your device, call the company support that sold it to you; do not call numbers, click or download anything. Also, if someone asks you to pay for tech support with a gift card, cash,

Preventing Forklift Tipovers



There are 2 types of tipovers that can occur on a forklift — a forward or a side tip. Tipovers can occur when you drive too fast, change direction, turn or travel on a grade or incline.

To prevent tipovers, be sure to follow these OSHA recommendations and requirements:

- ALWAYS** operate the forklift in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
- BUCKLE** your seatbelt before you start and drive the forklift.
- FOLLOW** the required speed limit.
- SLOW** down on slippery or wet surfaces.
- KEEP** a clear view of your travel path, look in the direction you are traveling and don't attempt to run over any objects in your path.
- NEVER** carry passengers.
- DO NOT** engage in stunt driving and horseplay.
- REDUCE** speed on turns and turn the steering wheel in a smooth, sweeping motion. Don't turn too sharply and remember that the rear of the forklift swings in the opposite direction of the turn.
- NEVER** turn on a grade or with forks elevated.
- SLOW** down and sound the horn at cross aisles or where vision is obstructed.
- STOP** before changing directions.

Foil the FLU



Flu season often peaks between December and February, but can last until May. Prevent the flu by following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advice:

Get vaccinated. The CDC recommends getting vaccinated by October, but February is not too late if vaccines are still available. Important: Talk to your health care provider before getting a flu shot if you are feeling sick, you have had Guillian-Barre Syndrome or have an

 **allergy to eggs or vaccine ingredients.**
Wash your hands with warm, soapy water often. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

Avoid contact with sick people. If you're sick, stay home and limit contact with others.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

Clean and disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated with germs.

Practice a healthy lifestyle by getting enough sleep, exercising, managing your stress, eating nutritious food



Burn Awareness Week is February 3-9.

Cook Up SAFETY

It all boils down to safe practices when it comes to preventing burns in the kitchen. Here are the ingredients to make sure you or your little ones don't end up in the emergency room:

- ➔ **Use the back burner** to prevent little hands from reaching hot pots. If you need to use front burners, make sure pot handles are turned inward.
- ➔ **Keep hot foods away** from counter or table edges.
- ➔ **Use oven mitts** or potholders to move heated pots or dishes. **Caution:** If the mitt is wet, it can cause scalds when combined with heat.
- ➔ **Open containers from oven or microwave slowly** and away from your face — steam can burn.
- ➔ **Never leave a pot or pan** that is cooking on a burner unattended.
- ➔ **Don't leave home** if you have something baking in the oven.
- ➔ **Set your water heater to 120°F or lower to prevent scalds.** Install scald-prevention tempering valves or thermostatic mixing valves.
- ➔ **Know that microwaves heat unevenly** so stir all foods or drinks before eating or drinking. Avoid heating baby bottles in a microwave for this reason. Instead place them in warm water to heat.
- ➔ **Use a frying pan screen** to prevent hot oil from splattering. Never add water to a pan with hot oil or it could splatter.
- ➔ **Buy a Class ABC extinguisher to put out kitchen fires.** The Class K extinguisher is often used in commercial kitchens. If you don't have an extinguisher handy, use a lid to put out a grease fire — never throw water, flour or cooking powders onto a grease fire. Instead use baking soda or salt.



Handling Hammers: Dos and Don'ts



Most of us use a hammer for various projects — some people use one every day. Here are some dos and don'ts regarding hammer use:

- DO** select the appropriate hammer for the job and one that has a cushioned handle to protect you from vibration and impact.
- DO** hold the hammer properly and avoid awkward positions when using it to prevent strains.
- DO** check the hammer to make sure the head is firmly attached to the handle.
- DO** use a hammer with a striking face diameter that is approximately ½ inch larger than the top of the tool (punch, chisel, wedge, etc.) being struck.
- DO** look behind and above you before you swing the hammer.
- DO** strike your hammer squarely with the striking face parallel to the object being struck.
- DON'T** use a hammer for any other purpose than what it is designed to do.
- DON'T** strike another hammer, stones or concrete with your hammer.
- DON'T** use a hammer if the head is loose or if the handle is cracked or splintered.
- DON'T** use hammers with sharp edges or any hammerhead with dents, chips, cracks or excessive wear.
- DON'T** strike an object with the side of the hammer.



SMART MOVES TOOLKIT including this issue's printable download, **Weight-Loss Aid: Exercise**, is at personalbest.com/extras/19V2tools.

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