

WEBMD.COM

JAN/FEB  
2017

# WebMD

**SUPER FOODS  
TO START THE  
NEW YEAR  
STRONG**

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**NEW  
WORK-  
OUT  
APPS  
HELP  
YOU  
GET FIT**  
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**LEARN  
TO TAME  
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STRESS**

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**SMART STEPS  
TO PROTECT  
YOUR  
HEART**  
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# Anthony Anderson

**ON LIVING WITH DIABETES  
AND WHY YOU SHOULDN'T  
IGNORE WARNING SIGNS**

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*“Young men  
will take their car  
for an oil change,  
but they won’t  
go get themselves  
checked out.”*

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## On the Cover

Anthony Anderson photographed by Maarten de Boer





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# Happy, Healthy New Year



A new year is full of possibility, but the unknown can also be unsettling.

In times of uncertainty, we need hope. That's why our goal in the year ahead is to bring you stories of hope. Stories of people working every day to improve what arguably matters most to all of us: our health. Whether through tireless caregiving, overcoming a personal health challenge (like this issue's cover celebrity, actor Anthony Anderson), or working to develop the next great medical breakthrough, we are surrounded by agents

of change. That's something we can all celebrate even when the future can seem uncertain.

New Year's is the season for making resolutions, but the truth is you can make them anytime. And a change for the better, whether big or small, can make a difference.

Here's to a happy and healthy new year to all of our WebMD readers.

*Kristy*

Kristy Hammam  
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## EVENTS



→  
RIGHT: Seth Rogen and Lauren Miller Rogen, our 2016 People's Choice winners. TOP (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT): Host Robin Roberts, Prodigy winner Trisha Prabhu, Advocate winner Betty Ferrell, RN, PhD, and Scientist winner Ed Damiano, PhD.



## WEBMD HEALTH HEROES HONORED

On November 3, WebMD celebrated its third annual Health Heroes Awards Gala at the Times Center in New York. Once again hosted by *Good Morning America* co-anchor **Robin Roberts**, the star-studded event paid tribute to an advocate, a prodigy, and a scientist, as well as our People's Choice winners, **Seth Rogen** and **Lauren Miller Rogen**. Each met a health challenge head-on and worked tirelessly to improve the lives of many others. Celebrities presented the evening's awards, and musical guests **Naturally 7** and **A Great Big World** entertained the crowd.

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## FACTS &amp; STATS

## Build a Better Body

Your goals may be about what you see on the outside, but a healthy immune system, spine, bones, and muscles bring benefits to your body for a lifetime



← **Built to Last**  
You only get one body—so do your best to adopt healthy habits.

206

Number of bones in your body. Make them dance! Exercise that requires you to support your own body weight keeps bones strong.

650+

Number of muscles in your body. Exercise them! Regular workouts help prevent heart disease, reduce stress and anxiety, and improve sleep.

24

Number of vertebrae in an adult spine. Sit and stand up straight! Slouching saps your energy and even affects your mood.

5,000+

Number of infection-fighting white blood cells in a drop of blood. Want to reduce risk for bacterial and viral infections? Get a good night's sleep.



## IN THE NEWS

# Start the Year Strong



**COLLEEN PARETTY**  
Editorial Director  
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January: A time of new beginnings and fresh starts. We call this issue of the magazine the "Build a Better Body" issue, and throughout you'll find articles devoted to better fitness, nutrition, stress relief, and parenting, with expert tips to get the new year off to a strong start. (We even have something for the pets in your life.) If losing weight is on your new year's resolution list, be sure to **turn to page 32** for "Your Body's Inner Engine," which explores new discoveries about how the body's metabolism works and ways you can rev it up for help dropping extra pounds. We even bust a few popular myths so you can maximize your weight-loss efforts. Some key findings: Sleep, and plenty of it, makes a difference. So does what you put on your plate—protein deserves a prominent place. Even how you approach losing weight matters. Slow and steady appears to be the way to go. — *Colleen*



## Healthy Cup

*Do you drink at least a cup of tea a day? It may reduce your risk for heart disease and heart attack, according to a study that tracked 6,500 adults for five years. Tea drinkers had slower rates of calcium buildup in their arteries (an early sign of heart disease), lower rates of the disease itself, and fewer heart attacks.*

SOURCE: The American Journal of Medicine



# 90%

### MISSING OUT

Percentage of high school students who exercise less than the recommended hour per day.

SOURCE: Pediatrics

### FIT FAIL

Wearing a fitness tracker decreased weight loss among dieters in an experiment. All those steps you rack up could make you think you can eat more.

SOURCE: JAMA

TRASH IT

Forget the “five-second rule.” Harmful bacteria can latch onto food that falls on the floor in one second or less. Just throw it away.

SOURCE: Applied and Environmental Microbiology



## FULFILLED

**“Just 5 more pounds to go”**

is the mantra of many dieters. But these days, women might be learning to accept themselves as they are, a new study shows. Researchers collected 250 studies on how men and women feel about their weight, including more than 100,000 people. Women were consistently less satisfied with their weight than men. But over the years, men’s satisfaction never changed while women’s steadily increased. Way to show yourself some love!

SOURCE: American Psychological Association



## Rejoice

*Happy people have healthier spouses. Even if you’re not happy yourself, if your spouse is happy, you’re more likely to be healthy. This could be because happy people invest energy in improving their partner’s life, which then improves their health. Or it could be that your spouse’s happiness energizes you and leads to healthy behavior.*

SOURCE: Health Psychology



## SICKLY SLUMBER

Do you enjoy a long afternoon nap?

That may suggest diabetes is on the horizon. In a study of more than 300,000 people, researchers found that those who take daily naps of an hour or more are more likely to develop diabetes later in life. Naps of 40 minutes or less had no negative impact. The researchers didn’t prove that naps caused diabetes, only that there was a link. The naps could be a result of getting too little sleep at night, which can increase risk for diabetes.

SOURCE: European Association for the Study of Diabetes

# 99%

### EASY ACCESS

Percentage of San Francisco’s population that lives within walking distance of a park. It ranks No. 1 in the U.S., followed by Boston and Washington, D.C.

SOURCE: The Trust for Public Land





## GAME ON

A little video gaming might be a good thing. In a study of 2,442 kids ages 7 to 11, gamers had significantly higher grades and test scores than kids who didn't play. Kids who played as little as one hour per week had faster reaction times than non-gamers. But two hours a week didn't increase the advantage. In fact, more time spent on video games was linked to behavior problems. Kids who played for nine hours a week or more had far more conduct problems than their peers.

SOURCE: *Annals of Neurology*

## ALTERNATIVE

**The dreaded colonoscopy** isn't the only way adults ages 50 to 75 with average risk for colon cancer can get screened. Research shows that a stool analysis or a CT scan of the colon is just as effective.

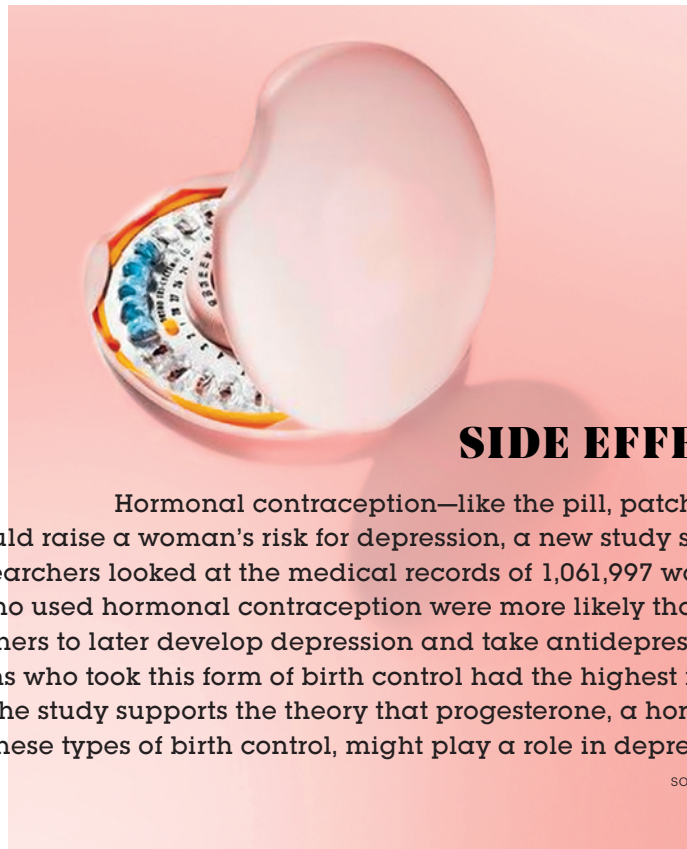
SOURCE: JAMA

# 1 in 5

### DIET CHOICE

Number of Americans on a gluten-free diet. This far exceeds the fewer than 1 in 100 Americans who have celiac disease and must eat gluten-free.

SOURCE: JAMA Internal Medicine



## SIDE EFFECT

Hormonal contraception—like the pill, patch, and ring—could raise a woman's risk for depression, a new study shows. Researchers looked at the medical records of 1,061,997 women. Those who used hormonal contraception were more likely than the others to later develop depression and take antidepressants. Teens who took this form of birth control had the highest risk of depression. The study supports the theory that progesterone, a hormone found in these types of birth control, might play a role in depression.

SOURCE: JAMA



### HEALTHY GLOW

Thirty minutes in front of a light box—like the ones used for seasonal depression—every morning could boost testosterone and sexual satisfaction in men with low libidos, says new research.

Source: European College of Neuropsychopharmacology



## FITNESS SAVVY

## Team Effort

Why train alone? Team up with online friends for better results

RECENT RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT logging onto social media platforms can help you reach your fitness goals. By connecting with friends on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, you'll muster up what you need to stay on track: encouragement, support, and advice, says Steve Graef, PhD, a sports psychologist at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center. To harness the power of your online community, Graef suggests setting and posting a specific goal and connecting with people who share similar interests. They'll send you positive vibes and call you out if you slack off.

—KARA MAYER ROBINSON

→ **Only Connect**  
Social media can help you reach your fitness goals.





**Scan This Page for More**  
Read *Diet Apps: The One Feature to Look For*, an article at WebMD.com.  
Learn how on page 4.

REVIEWED BY *Michael W. Smith, MD, CPT*  
WebMD Chief Medical Editor



**CLARK BARTRAM**  
TRAINER,  
PRESIDENT OF FROG  
FITNESS

## FITNESS

## App It Up

Download these four innovative tools and you'll have a trainer, nutritionist, and gym at your fingertips

Choose the right apps and your smartphone can help you eat better, work out smarter, and take charge of your health. "Some are too technical, some are too simple, and some are just right," says trainer Clark Bartram. These four sit in his sweet spot.



## GET MOVING

**Fitnet Live Coach** (FREE)

Tap this app when you need a video workout on the fly, whether it's five-minute yoga or total-body boot camp. Mix and match workouts or follow a weekly plan. Bartram says it's spot-on if you have an overloaded schedule and need flexibility. Cool feature: A built-in selfie cam measures how well you keep up with the video trainer.

**fit.net**

## CONNECT WITH OTHERS

**MyFitnessPal** (FREE)

You may already know this app as the calorie-counter you pull out at restaurants. Now it counts your daily steps and calculates calories burned, too. "It's evolved really nicely. The community aspect has grown stronger as well," says Bartram, an International Sports Sciences Association master trainer. Jump onto message boards for fitness suggestions, tips, and support.

**myfitnesspal.com**

## FUEL RIGHT

**Protein Pow** (\$3.99, iPhone/iPad; \$4.96 Android)

"This app helps you understand protein sources and gives great recipe ideas," says Bartram. Tired of shakes? Learn how to mix your protein powder with other ingredients to create meals like maple and banana whey protein pancakes and protein-packed pizza.

**proteinpow.com**

## TRACK CHANGES

**S Health** (FREE)

Preloaded on most Samsung phones, this app syncs to your phone's built-in sensors to track your daily steps, caffeine levels, water intake, blood pressure, and more. "The experience is intuitive," Bartram says. "It gives you an in-depth look into your daily activities and decisions, without being complicated."

**shealth.samsung.com**

## EXPERT TIPS

**BAN DISTRACTIONS**

*"Texts and notifications wreak havoc on focus. Turn them off when you work out."*

**PUSH THROUGH**

*"Don't quit just because nobody's watching. Do the extra set of reps. Run the extra mile."*

**MATCH UP**

*"Choose apps that suit your lifestyle. If you have a busy schedule, try an app loaded with quick video workouts you can do anywhere."*

**USE IT OR LOSE IT**

*"Don't just download the app. Open it—and use it—often. You have to be consistent to see results."*

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Scan This Page for More  
Read *Change Your Body Image,  
Not Your Body*, an article at WebMD.com.  
Learn how on page 4.

## MIND MATTERS

# Vicious Cycle

Not only is “fat-shaming” hurtful, research shows it leads to more weight gain, not less. Obese people need support, not scorn



→ **In It Together**  
Parents can help kids have better attitudes about weight.

any one action is unlikely to relieve it. But the AMA's action certainly is a step forward.”

Brownell adds: “There are strong genetic contributions toward obesity that, when combined with our toxic food environment, create massive pressures on the population that lead to weight gain. The fact we have so many more overweight [people] now, compared with decades ago—is it because people have less willpower now? Research

doesn't show declines in personal responsibility in seatbelt use, health care checkups, dental hygiene, and other related behaviors.”

Brownell believes that when “genetic vulnerabilities” meet today's ubiquitous and fatty fast foods, prepackaged products, and snacking culture, the result is a perfect storm for obesity that's difficult to quell.

“Is it fair? Does it help?” he asks about fat-shaming. “In both cases, the answer is ‘no.’ Blaming people doesn't address the problem. Shaming children and adults leads to more eating and more weight gain, rather than less.”

That's because overweight people internalize such negative messages. “They're thought to be lazy, stupid, dirty,” says Brownell. “Research would never show that to be the case. These associations hit home with both men and women. It would be very helpful to the mental and physical health of the population if they stopped.”

The answer, he suggests, is to “combat negative attitudes. And teach children there are natural variations in body weight, just as there are in other physical attributes.”

WE LIVE IN AN AGE WHERE MOST PEOPLE WOULDN'T DREAM OF RIDICULING another person for being very tall. Or having a different skin color. Or even being extremely thin. So why is “fat-shaming” so pervasive? Why is it common for perfect strangers to snicker over items in someone else's grocery cart? Or to mock the big passenger on the plane?

Nearly a third of Americans are obese, a term the CDC defines as having a body mass index of 30 or higher. To combat this rising epidemic, and perhaps to nudge insurance companies into covering treatment, the American Medical Association classified it as a disease in 2013.

Will such a change shame back all the fat-shamers out there? According to leading obesity expert Kelly D. Brownell, PhD, dean of the Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy, “the stigma is so profound that

## BY THE NUMBERS

36%

Percentage of American adults who are obese. Some 6.3% (1 in 20) are morbidly obese, with a BMI of 35 to 40 and significant health problems due to weight.

3

The number of times women are fat-shamed more than men who have identical BMIs.

48%

Rate of obesity for non-Hispanic blacks (age-adjusted). Next are Hispanics (42.5%), non-Hispanic whites (34.5%), and non-Hispanic Asians (11.7%).

1.5

The number of times overweight kids are more likely to be shamed and bullied, says a study published in *Pediatrics*.



Scan This Page for More  
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Tone, a video at WebMD.com.  
Learn how on page 4.

REVIEWED BY Michael W. Smith, MD, CPT  
WebMD Chief Medical Editor



#### → No More Heavy Lifting

Lighter weights are just as effective as heavier ones, but you still have to work hard.

For the study, the research team divided nearly 50 men into two groups. For 12 weeks, one group lifted heavy weights—75% to 90% of the maximum amount they could lift once—for eight to 12 repetitions; another group lifted weights of about 30% to 50% of their max for 20 to 25 repetitions.

“Both groups got just as big and just as strong,” says lead author Rob Morton, a PhD candidate studying kinesiology at McMaster. “You don’t have to lift heavy weights to increase your muscle mass.”

That’s a positive message for people who are just starting a strengthening program or returning to the gym after an injury, says Morton. Lighter weights, he explains, allow people to focus on developing correct form when lifting. Heavier weights, by contrast, may be too much for some men to manage properly, a potential risk for injury.

However, if you do choose lighter weights for your workout, you still have to work. “Effort is king, and there’s absolutely no substitute,” says Morton. “If you’re not pushing yourself, you’re not going to get better.”

That means that whatever weight you choose, you must lift until failure, or until you can’t lift any more with good form. With lighter weights, you’ll need to do more repetitions to reach that point, so your workout will take a bit longer. But you’ll build strength just as quickly as if you’d overloaded the bar.

“If you take the time to do it properly,” says Morton, “then down the road, you’re going to see big, big changes.”

#### MEN'S HEALTH

## Light Weight

You don’t have to be a he-man in the gym to see results. New research points the way to potentially safer ways to build strength and muscle

DO THE HEAVY WEIGHTS AT THE GYM INTIMIDATE YOU? SKIP THEM AND grab the lighter ones. It’s the effort you put forth, not the pounds you press, that will make the difference, according to a recent study conducted by researchers from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

## New to Lifting?

GET STARTED SAFELY WITH THESE TIPS FROM STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING COACH ROB MORTON.

### EASE INTO IT

Pick a weight that you can lift comfortably with proper form, without shoulder or back pain, for 15 to 25 reps. Don’t increase the load until you master your starting weight.

### BRING A BUDDY

To learn how to lift correctly, work out with a regular gym-goer who can show you the ropes. Otherwise, spend a few sessions with a certified personal trainer.

### MIX IT UP

To maximize your workouts, vary the exercises you do and the weights that you lift. The key is to lift to fatigue, no matter whether you lift heavy or light weights.





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Now, a slideshow at WebMD.com.  
Learn how on page 4.

## WORK MATTERS

# Stress-Proof Your Job

One in three employees say workplace stress makes them sick. Here's how to keep it from happening to you



→ **Rise Above It All**  
A few simple changes can make work less stressful.

A stressful workplace can ignite the same stress hormones as running from a lion, Carter says. In a true emergency, that “fight or flight” surge of cortisol and adrenaline can be helpful, promoting alertness. But if levels remain elevated, you can wind up with high blood pressure or blood sugar, weakened immunity, insomnia, and weight gain. Carter blames increased job stress on technology—which tethers workers to their jobs after hours—along with distracting work environments and incivility. Try these four workplace tension tamers.

**1. MONOTASK.** “The brain was not evolved to multitask, and it can be very stressful when we try,” says Carter. Set aside a solid two-hour chunk each day, when you are at your most alert, to mute your phone, maybe put on noise-canceling headphones, and ask co-workers not to interrupt, so you can tackle an important project. You’ll likely boost your productivity and make fewer errors.

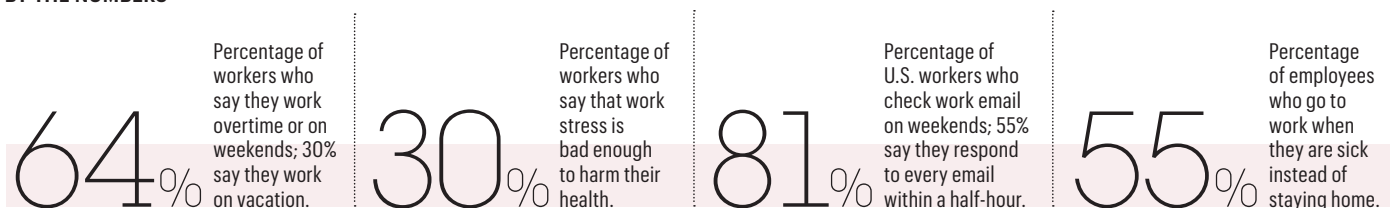
**2. WORK IN SPURTS.** Due to cyclical brainwave changes throughout the day, people can focus for only about 90 to 120 minutes before the brain drifts into a less-alert phase and they start spinning their wheels, says Carter. Try working for 90 minutes, then taking a break for 15 minutes. Repeat.

**3. IGNORE EMAIL.** One study found checking email almost immediately boosts heart rate, blood pressure, and cortisol levels. The more frequently workers check it, the more stressed they are. Instead of checking compulsively, try to schedule time at the beginning, middle, and end of each day.

**4. CLEAN UP.** Just looking at clutter can prompt cortisol to spike. “Ordered environments help people feel they have more control,” says Carter.

**EVER FEEL LIKE YOU'RE WORKING YOURSELF TO DEATH? YOU MIGHT BE—LITERALLY.** Workplace stress accounts for 120,000 deaths annually (more than influenza or diabetes) and is as bad for your health as secondhand smoke, according to Harvard researchers. And the problem is getting worse, says Christine Carter, PhD, an executive coach and sociologist and senior fellow at The Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley. “We are seeing a lot more exhaustion and burnout among employees.”

## BY THE NUMBERS





## HAIR CARE

## Prime Condition

Pamper your hair with the right product for your hair type

→ **Shiny, Happy Hair**  
Want manageable, healthy, and beautiful tresses? The conditioner you choose is key.

FOR FINE HAIR, SAYS HEATHER CIE, CO-OWNER OF CIE SPARKS SALON in Malibu, California, use a lightweight volumizing conditioner or spray leave-in every two days to keep hair frizz-free without weighing it down. Wavy locks can fluff up in humidity or grow limp in dry air; manage either situation with a lightweight moisturizing conditioner designed for waves. For curls, a once-a-week leave-in hydrating treatment works wonders. The curlier the hair, the drier it gets. Try a hair mask or deep conditioner once or twice a week. For color-treated hair, use a color-safe conditioner, or try a spray leave-in to refresh muted shades. —AYREN JACKSON-CANNADY





**CHRIS ADIGUN, MD**  
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EXPERT PICKS

# Hope Chest

Skin care doesn't stop at chin level. Treat your neck and chest with as much care as you give your face



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Read 7 Tips to Soothe Dry, Itchy Skin, an article at WebMD.com. Learn how on page 4.



**1. SOFTER SPOT**  
**Restorsea**  
**Repairing Neck and Decolletage Treatment** (\$150)

"Many repairing and restorative products have enzymes and acids that help improve skin quality, texture, and tone, but some can be irritating or itchy, especially during colder months. That's not the case with the gentler (yet effective) enzymes in this product."

**2. GIVE A LIFT**  
**Juice Beauty Stem Cellular Lifting Neck Cream** (\$55)

"Notice a crepey look on your neck or chest? Try this nutrient-rich cream that helps firm skin, thanks to an infusion of vitamin E, vitamin C, and resveratrol from grape seeds."

**3. PICKER-UPPER**  
**Olay ProX Hydra Firming Cream** (\$44.99)

"The Olay ProX Line is both affordable and highly effective. Bonus: It has several options for face that you can apply to the neck and chest, like this cream you can use at night to boost elasticity and lock in moisture."

**4. DE-CREASE**  
**Jan Marini Juvenile** (\$90)

"Formulated with anti-oxidants, peptides, and hyaluronic acid, this rejuvenating cream firms, smooths, and hydrates neck skin that has started showing signs of aging."

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Check out 15 Tips for a Perfect  
Manicure, a slideshow at WebMD.com.  
Learn how on page 4.

BEAUTY SMARTS

# Nail It

How to keep polish from chipping, whether you do your own nails or prefer a professional manicure

Is your nail polish peeling...already? To keep your nails looking nicer longer, follow these tips from nail artist Yajaira Rentas of 212 Salon and Day Spa in Upper Montclair, New Jersey.

## 1. COVER YOUR BASES

A base coat—primer polish that you apply before color polish—is non-negotiable. The best kind is a rubberized formula—Rentas likes CND Stickey Base Coat (\$8.50)—that adheres to the nail while simultaneously grabbing the next layer of polish.

## 2. RESIST THE URGE TO PICK

Keep a nail file and clippers nearby so that when a snag arises, you can simply file or trim it smooth. Fiddling with the skin around your nails can lead to unintentionally picking off polish.



## 3. OIL YOUR CUTICLES AND NAILS

One of the best types to use is straight sunflower seed oil you can find at your local health food store. It's packed with hydrating fatty acids. Rub a tiny drop into each nail bed, then top with hand cream. That should help keep your cuticles and polish from drying and cracking.

## 4. GO EASY ON THE TOP COAT

A thin layer of top coat—try Sally Hansen Ultimate Shield (\$4.49), Rentas says—will seal in and stretch out your mani. But piling on too much can cause premature peeling.

## 5. WORK QUICKLY

If you're doing your own nails, by the time you finish nail No. 10, nail No. 1 will be ready for another coat. You don't want your nails to dry too much between coats because that can cause air bubbles.

## 6. DON'T FORGET GLOVES

When doing chores, rubber gloves are always helpful to keep polish-demolishing chemicals off your nails and preserve the life of your manicure.

# Aisle Do

WAVE GOODBYE TO CRACKED, RAW SKIN WITH THESE SOOTHING OPTIONS, RECOMMENDED BY LEADING DERMATOLOGISTS.

## PRODUCT PICK

**CERAVE Therapeutic Hand Cream** (\$8.97)

"I'm a huge fan of ceramides in this hand cream to restore the skin barrier and keep moisture in the skin. Plus, it's not greasy and is affordable."

**Carina Wasko, MD**  
assistant professor of dermatology,  
Baylor College of Medicine, Houston

## PRODUCT PICK

**THERASEAL Hand Protection** (\$34.39)

"The active ingredient in TheraSeal is dimethicone, which lacks the greasiness of many formulas. It's also alcohol- and fragrance-free. I recommend applying it to damp skin to lock in moisture."

**Vail Reese, MD**  
dermatologist, San Francisco

## PRODUCT PICK

**AVÈNE XeraCalm A.D. Lipid-Replenishing Cream** (\$32)

"XeraCalm cream is a truly preservative-free preparation that is incredibly smooth and moisturizing. It's a great option to use during the day."

**Peter Lio, MD**  
clinical assistant professor of  
dermatology, Feinberg School of Medicine,  
Northwestern University, Chicago





## ANATOMY OF...

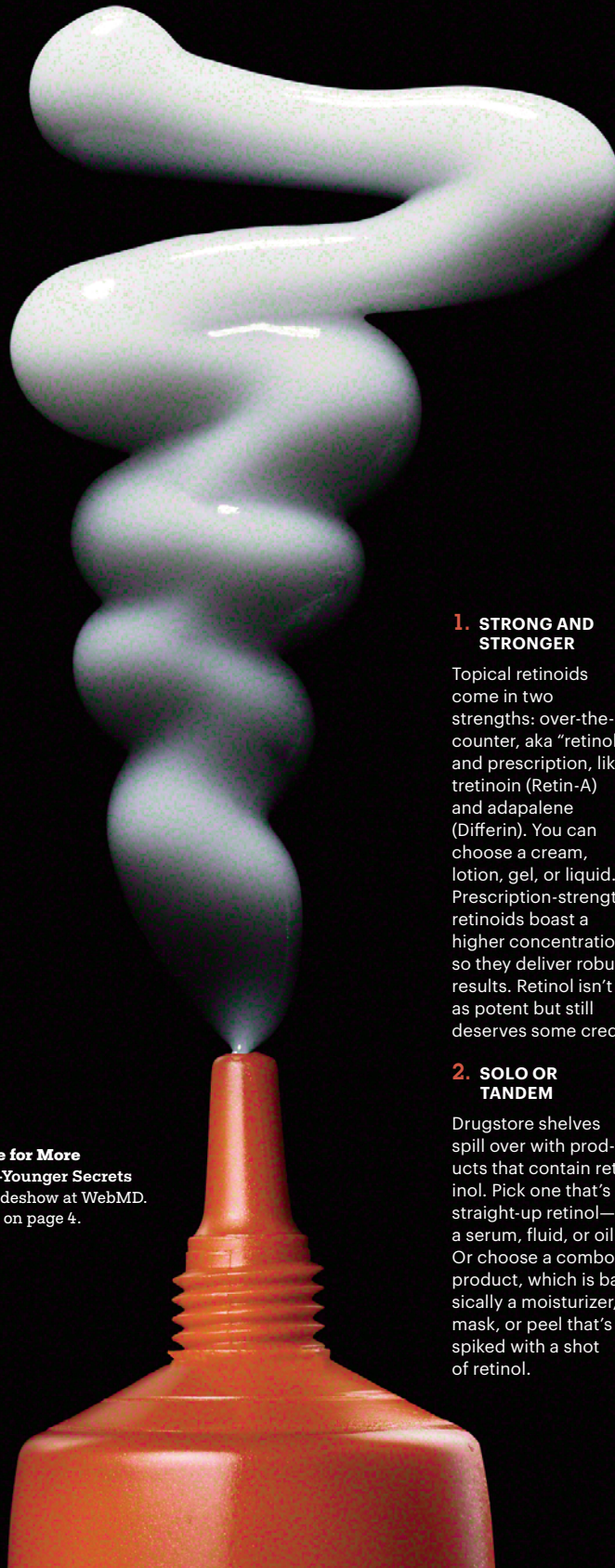
# Retinoids

Why these vitamin A spin-offs get an A+

IF A SKIN CARE INGREDIENT could nab a Nobel Prize, the gold medal would go to retinoids. Just about every dermatologist will tell you: This vitamin A derivative is pure genius. Retinoids are scientifically proven to rev up skin turnover, stoke collagen, unclog pores, and quell inflammation. They erase skin care woes like roughness, hyperpigmentation, fine wrinkles, and sun damage. They're aces at clearing up acne, pack a punch against psoriasis, and help treat certain types of cancer. Talk about multitasking! One caveat: Retinoids might not be safe during pregnancy. If you're pregnant or planning to have a baby, chat with your doctor before using.



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Check out **Look-Younger Secrets That Work**, a slideshow at WebMD.com. Learn how on page 4.



## 1. STRONG AND STRONGER

Topical retinoids come in two strengths: over-the-counter, aka "retinol," and prescription, like tretinoin (Retin-A) and adapalene (Differin). You can choose a cream, lotion, gel, or liquid. Prescription-strength retinoids boast a higher concentration, so they deliver robust results. Retinol isn't as potent but still deserves some cred.

## 2. SOLO OR TANDEM

Drugstore shelves spill over with products that contain retinol. Pick one that's straight-up retinol—in a serum, fluid, or oil. Or choose a combo product, which is basically a moisturizer, mask, or peel that's spiked with a shot of retinol.

## 3. EASE INTO IT

When you start using a retinoid, you may get red, flaky, dry skin, especially if it's a prescription. High-octane formulas may also make your skin sting or burn. Typically, the higher the concentration, the more elevated your symptoms. Side effects diminish as your skin adapts. Plus, retinoids take time to kick in—as much as six months. Try to be patient. Staying the course can lead to hefty rewards: fewer signs of aging and clearer, smoother skin.

## 4. TIME IT RIGHT

Apply a retinoid 20 to 30 minutes after you wash your face. If you use an over-the-counter product, apply it every night. But if it's a high-powered formula, start with a few times a week. And go easy. Slathering on too much can leave you with clogged pores, a blotchy complexion, and irritation.





← **Get a Jump-Start**  
Kids should move at least 60 minutes a day to put them on a path of lifelong heart health.

## FAMILY TIME

## All in the Family

Healthy habits work best when the whole family gets in on the action

**MOST CHILDREN START OUT LIFE WITH POSITIVE HEART MEASURES**—like normal cholesterol and blood pressure—but they can quickly turn them upside down with bad habits. The American Heart Association says nearly all kids miss the mark on diet and exercise, and that's bad news for their heart health today—and into adulthood. What's a parent to do? Pediatric cardiologist Kendra Ward, MD, of Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago suggests more leafy greens and colorful fruits, and fewer cookies and chips from a box. Get your kids moving a minimum of 60 minutes each day. If kids are stuck to their screens, use activity trackers to encourage movement. They'll have so much fun they won't even realize they're getting heart-healthy in the process. —STEPHANIE WATSON





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## FAMILY

BY Colleen Oakley

REVIEWED BY Nivin C.S. Todd, MD  
WebMD Medical Reviewer



### PREGNANCY

## Healthy Mom Body

The building blocks for a better  
(and healthier) pregnancy start now

MAYBE SHE'LL BE A ROCKET SCIENTIST. MAYBE HE'LL BE A ROCK STAR. While parents have different dreams for their kids, they all have one hope in common: a healthy baby, which starts with a healthy pregnancy. And you can lay the groundwork for that even before you become pregnant, says Sheryl Ross, MD, an OB/GYN at Providence Saint John's Health Center in Santa Monica, California.

### ASK YOUR DOCTOR

#### Q How much weight should I gain/lose?

While it varies, the ideal weight gain for an average-sized woman is 25 pounds.

#### Q Do I need prescription prenatal vitamins?

While they're not necessarily better than over-the-counter supplements, prescription

prenatals are often smaller and may be easier to get down.

#### Q What exercises should I avoid?

Pregnancy can affect joint stability and balance, so make sure your current routine is safe for your changing body.

#### Q How many extra calories should I be consuming?

The average goal is 300 calories (so, no, you're not really "eating for two").

#### ← Stress Less

Regular exercise and rest are key for expectant mothers.

Six months before you plan to conceive, discuss any medications you take with your doctor to make sure they're not harmful to a fetus. Three months prior, abstain from alcohol and start popping a prenatal vitamin.

Once you're pregnant, eat a well-balanced diet, says Elizabeth Coronado, MD, an OB/GYN at Baylor Scott & White Health in Plano, Texas. Some powerhouse foods for pregnancy include yogurt (calcium), spinach (iron), lentils (folic acid), and cooked salmon (good fatty acids). Also, drink at least 8 to 12 glasses of water a day, says Ross, to aid digestion, prevent urinary tract infections, and reduce the risk of premature contractions.

Regular exercise (walking, jogging, or swimming three to five times a week) can help lower blood pressure, keep your weight in a healthy range, and alleviate stress, says Sarah Yamaguchi, MD, an OB/GYN at Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Angeles. Also, try to get at least seven to nine hours of sleep.

Finally, cut yourself some slack. "These are guidelines, but at the end of a long week, it's OK to treat yourself to a bowl of ice cream," says Yamaguchi.





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Get the **WebMD Baby App** to track growth  
and capture your baby's special moments.  
[Learn how on page 4.](#)

REVIEWED BY **Hansa Bhargava, MD**  
WebMD Medical Editor

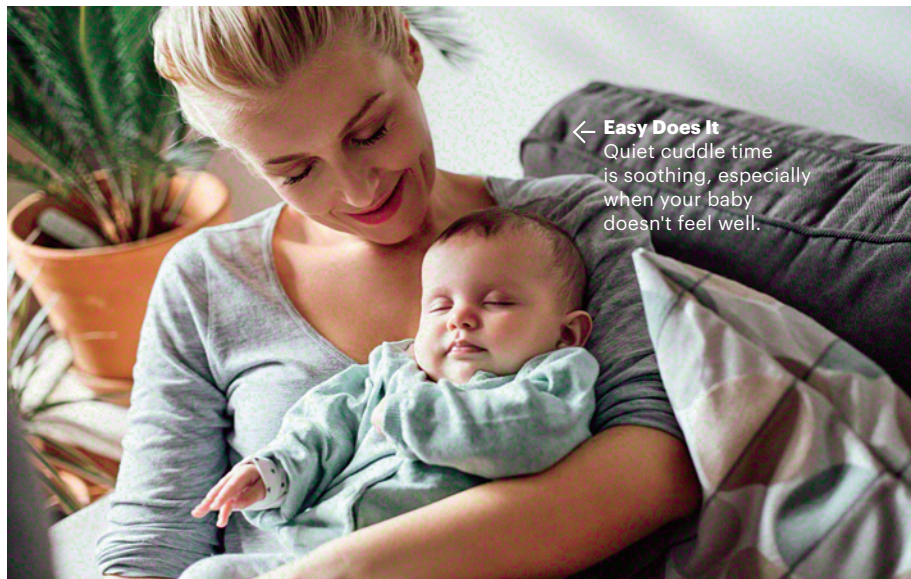


**DEAN BLUMBERG, MD**  
CHIEF OF PEDIATRIC INFEC-  
TIOUS DISEASES, UNIVERSITY  
OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS  
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

BABY

# The First Cold

Surviving cold and flu season with an infant can be stressful—even more so for first-time parents. We ask our expert how you can all feel better



← **Easy Does It**  
Quiet cuddle time is soothing, especially when your baby doesn't feel well.

There's no vaccine for a cold, but you can take common-sense measures. If someone has a fever or is coughing uncontrollably, they shouldn't be around the baby. Washing hands frequently and using alcohol-based hand gels can also reduce the risk of transmitting a cold to your child.

## What medication can I use?

Babies and toddlers under 4 should not be given any kind of over-the-counter cold or flu medication. In fact, most experts recommend not using them until age 6. But you can make your baby comfortable by giving infant acetaminophen or ibuprofen to help keep the fever down and help with earaches, muscle aches, and sore throats.

## My baby has a cold and doesn't seem to be hungry. Should I be worried?

A sick baby often doesn't eat as much as usual. That's OK. They might lose some weight but will gain it back when they feel better. But dehydration is a danger, so encourage your baby to drink as much as he can. For younger babies, that should be either breast milk or formula, but babies older than 6 months can also have some water.

## What's the most important thing parents need to know about colds and flu in babies?

That the best treatment is prevention. Babies under 6 months old are too young for a flu vaccine, but immunizing all family members and other people who will be around the baby is the single most important thing you can do to protect a baby from the flu. If the mother gets a flu vaccine while she is pregnant, her immunity will also pass to the baby. Babies whose mothers get the flu vaccine while pregnant are about 50% less likely to get the flu during their first year of life.

*"A sick baby often **doesn't eat as much as usual.** That's OK. They might lose some weight but will gain it back when they feel better."*

## What else can I do to make my baby feel better?

Making the environment less stimulating can be soothing, so try lowering the lights and decreasing the amount of noise around them. And don't forget lots of holding, rocking, and cuddling.

## 5 Red Flags

A BABY'S COLD OR FLU USUALLY RUNS ITS COURSE ON ITS OWN. BUT CALL YOUR PEDIATRICIAN IF YOU NOTICE ANY OF THESE SIGNS, SAYS DEAN BLUMBERG, MD.

### DEHYDRATION

*"Your baby isn't wetting at least one diaper about every 4 to 6 hours."*

### BREATHING PROBLEMS

*"Your baby's breathing doesn't seem normal—she's breathing fast, wheezing, or making strange noises in her sleep."*

### FEVER

*"Call your doctor for a fever of 100.4°F or higher in a baby younger than 3 months, and 102°F or higher in older babies."*

### PROLONGED SYMPTOMS

*"Most fevers go away within a couple of days, so call the doctor if your baby's symptoms keep hanging on."*

### INCONSOLABLE CRYING

*"Sick babies are fussy babies, but if your child can't be soothed or is unusually sleepy, make that call."*





**Scan This Page for More**  
Read [How to Boost Your Kid's Body Image](#), an article at WebMD.com.  
Learn how on page 4.



### → Tread Lightly

To help kids develop healthy habits, don't push too hard.

## PARENTING

# Weighty Matters

Think your teen needs to drop some pounds? If so, you'll want to proceed carefully, our expert says

**NOTE TO PARENTS: WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T ASK YOUR CHILD TO GO on a diet.** So say pediatricians who have seen an alarming spike in eating disorders among previously overweight teens. "A teen sees a pediatrician and is told they've gained a lot of weight and need to do something about it," explains Neville Golden, MD, chief of the division of adolescent medicine at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford in Palo Alto, California.

"Six months later, they come back having lost 50 pounds, with a dangerously low heart rate, and have to be hospitalized for an eating disorder."

Many of these patients are still normal weight, he says, but diet pills, laxatives, meal skipping, and over-exercising have left them with thinning hair, fatigue, or loss of menstrual periods. The American Academy of Pediatrics issued a report last fall stressing that the root causes of obesity and eating disorders—loneliness, depression, boredom—can be similar, and offering advice for addressing the former without promoting the latter. "The focus should be on a healthy lifestyle rather than on weight," says Golden, lead author of the paper.

He discourages parents from putting teens on a calorie-restrictive diet, which can slow metabolism and sabotage healthy goals. One study found that normal-weight girls who dieted in ninth grade were three times more likely to be overweight in 12th grade. Another found teens who skipped meals and sharply cut calories were 18 times more likely than their peers to develop an eating disorder.

Commenting about weight or body image—your teen's or your own—can backfire, research shows. Teens teased about their weight are twice as likely to be overweight five years later. On the flip side, eating family meals together, keeping sodas and sugary snacks out of the home, and modeling healthy habits can all lower risk of obesity and eating disorders.

Weight naturally spikes temporarily in many teens, as they stop growing taller. Often no intervention is required. But if your child is above the 85th percentile for weight, Golden advises a conversation between your teen and his pediatrician to discuss the details.

## BY THE NUMBERS

35%  
Percentage of 12- to 19-year-olds who are currently overweight or obese.

37%  
Percentage of adolescents with eating disorders who were previously overweight, up fivefold since 2005.

60%  
Percentage of elementary school girls concerned about their weight; 40% is the minimum estimate.

40%  
Percentage of early adolescent females who've been teased about their weight by peers or family.





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Watch How to Take Your Kid's or Teen's  
Temperature, a video at WebMD.com.  
Learn how on page 4.

KIDS

# Fake Out

How do you know if your kid is ill—or really wants to stay home and watch TV all day? Here's how to be a sickness supersleuth



ARM YOURSELF WITH TWO BASIC TOOLS TO COLLECT HARD evidence about your child's health: a thermometer and a small flashlight. "The old wives' tale about feeling for a fever by placing a hand on the forehead just doesn't work," says Donald Ford, MD, a family doctor at Cleveland Clinic Hillcrest Hospital. Your hand tells you the outer-forehead temperature. But you want to check if your child has a raised internal temperature or a fever.

*"Feeling for a fever by placing a hand on the forehead just doesn't work."*

Things like scrunching up under a blanket or putting a hot water bottle on the forehead can make your child feel warm, and he might use such tricks to try and fool you. But these things don't necessarily raise your body's true internal temperature.

"You can't fake a fever," says Marc I. Leavey, MD, a primary care specialist at Lutherville Personal Physicians in Lutherville, Maryland. Besides, "if your kid has a fever, [teachers] don't want them in school."

Doctors define a fever as anything higher than 100.5°F. They aren't worried about lower temperatures (although your school may be). Your child should have a normal temperature without using any fever-lowering medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, for 24 hours. Take his temperature to be sure.

Next, you can use the small flashlight to peer inside your child's mouth. And make sure he opens wide and says "Ahhh." This pushes the tongue down so you can see the tonsils.

"If the child has white spots or white discharge coming from the back of the throat, the kid is probably sick," Ford says. "It doesn't tell you if he has strep, because you need a swab for that, but it's still not normal."

Note too that a child who says he's too sick for school may be scared, worried, or anxious. "Sometimes it's not about faking it as much as it is about finding an excuse not to deal with an uncomfortable situation, such as getting teased or bullied," Ford adds.

## Know the Signs

THESE SYMPTOMS INDICATE AN HONEST-TO-GOODNESS AILMENT THAT WARRANTS A TRIP TO THE DOCTOR.

### STOMACHACHE

Stomach troubles can result from all sorts of ailments, from anxiety to constipation to something more serious, like appendicitis. If your child has severe pain in the right lower belly and hasn't had his appendix removed, get immediate medical help.

### HEADACHE

If your child complains of blurry vision or eye pain, a migraine might be to blame, and he might need a day of rest. If your child has a stiff neck with a headache and fever, keep him out of school and see a doctor right away to rule out meningitis. If he's vomiting along with the headache, you should check with your doctor.

### RASH

A little bit of redness in a skin fold, on the elbow, or in the groin is likely nothing. But dial up your doctor if your child has a rash that covers a large part of his body and appears as red dots, in a lacy pattern, or as little pimples.





**Scan This Page for More**  
Read [How to Make the Most of Your Vet Visit](#), an article at WebMD.com.  
Learn how on page 6.

REVIEWED BY [Will Draper, DVM](#)  
WebMD Medical Reviewer

## PETS

# Time to Visit the Vet

Make some healthy New Year's resolutions for your pet, too.  
Here's why a wellness visit is time well spent



AT WELLNESS EXAMS, VETERINARIANS CAN PROVIDE ALL the preventive care that's right for your pet's age, breed, and health status. Regular vet visits also make it possible to catch potential problems early. That usually makes them easier to treat—and easier on your wallet.

During your visit, you'll have a chance to discuss with the veterinarian any questions or worries you have about your pet. "I spend the first part of the visit listening to the

owner's concerns about the animal and also listening for things that they may not even know are issues," says David Cloutier, DVM, of Veazie Veterinary Clinic in Veazie, Maine.

Even if you don't have any concerns, the veterinarian will check every body system to make sure that it's working as it should. "I may pick up on an ear infection that the owner wasn't aware of or a gait problem that the owner didn't notice," he says.

Depending on your pet's age and breed, the veterinarian might recommend screening for certain conditions, blood work, urinalysis, fecal exam, or other tests.

Some common issues that veterinarians may uncover during a routine visit include dental disease, skin infections or tumors, heart murmurs, cataracts, painful joints, and flea, tick, or tapeworm infestations.

How often should you plan a well visit? That depends on your dog's or cat's age, breed, and health. "As a general rule, puppies and kittens might go monthly or every six months. Healthy young adults might only need annual visits. Older pets might go twice a year or more," says Cloutier. Give your vet a call to find out when your pet is due.

## ASK YOUR VET

**+** *Is my cat or dog due for any vaccines or other preventive care?*

**+** *What's the best flea control for my pet's breed and lifestyle?*

**+** *Is my cat or dog at a healthy weight?*

**+** *Does my pet need more exercise? If so, what's the best way to get it?*

**+** *What's the best diet and nutrition for my cat or dog?*

**+** *When should my pet come back for another visit?*

## Keep Calm and Carry On

DO YOUR PETS GO APE WHEN IT'S TIME TO GO TO THE VET? TRY THESE TIPS TO KEEP THEM CALM AND COOPERATIVE.

### EASE INTO IT

Don't bring out the pet carrier only when it's time to go to the vet. Leave it out at all times as a normal part of the environment.

That way, pets will feel more comfortable when you put them inside.

### USE A SHORT LEASH

Keep your dog on a short leash as you walk to and from the car so you have maximum control over him.

### KEEP THINGS QUIET

Decrease stimulation in the car. For cats, that means keeping the carrier covered with a blanket or towel. Don't let dogs ride with their heads out the window. Sit your dog on a blanket on the floor in front of the passenger seat.

### GO HUNGRY

Take pets to the vet hungry so that you or your veterinarian can bribe, distract, or comfort them with treats if necessary.



# HEALTH HAPPENINGS

Products, Ideas & Promotions for Healthy Living

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# LIFE



# ISH

*How did Anthony Anderson prepare for his part on the hit ABC sitcom black-ish?*

BY Matt McMillen  
REVIEWED BY Brunilda Nazario, MD,  
WebMD Lead Medical Editor

*He lived his life*



# “My

character’s name is Andre Johnson; it may as well be Anthony Anderson,” says Anderson, a two-time Emmy nominee for his lead role on the show. “It’s not far from reality in terms of wanting to give my children better than what I had growing up on the streets of Compton as a kid, just like Andre’s trying to do for his kids. That’s me you see on the screen.”

Like Andre, Anderson, 46, refers to himself as a “first-generation success.” Born in 1970, he grew up in a neighborhood dominated by gang violence and crime, but he escaped that world through acting. He attended a performing arts high school in Hollywood and earned a scholarship to Howard University, where he graduated with a degree in theater arts.

During the past two decades, Anderson has compiled a long list of credits in film and TV, both comedy and drama. He played detective Kevin Bernard on the final three seasons of NBC’s *Law & Order* and, on the opposite side of the law, he portrayed Antwon Mitchell, a vicious drug lord, in a standout role on FX’s *The Shield*. He hosts the reboot of ABC’s *To Tell the Truth*. And he has appeared in more than 20 movies since his 1999 film debut, including *Barbershop*, *Scary Movie 4*, and *The Departed*.



Twice before, Anderson’s played a dad for laughs, first as a struggling actor and single father on the 2003 WB sitcom *All About the Andersons*, and then nearly 10 years later as a stay-at-home dad on NBC’s *Guys With Kids*. Both lasted only a season. *black-ish*, on the other hand, proves that the third time’s a charm.

On the Emmy-nominated sitcom, which debuted in 2014 and is now in its third season, Anderson plays a successful advertising executive who grew up in Compton, California, and who’s now married to a doctor, played by Traci Ellis Ross. The fictional couple and their kids live in an all-white neighborhood, where the show focuses on Andre’s efforts to maintain his and his family’s black identity in a world that’s very different from the one he knew in childhood. His own children’s experiences often inform the show’s story lines.

“Not only was my son the only chocolate drop in his class, he was the only chocolate drop in his grade for more than three years,” Anderson says of his son Nathan, now 16. “He saw what was going on in inner cities, in particular with young black men, and that wasn’t his experience. Because of that, he told me, ‘I don’t feel black.’”

Anderson convinced his son that his own life did not make him any less black, and Nathan surprised his father by asking if he could have a bar mitzvah, like so many of his friends at school. That story appeared in the first episode of *black-ish*. “On the show, it became a bro mitzvah,” Anderson says. “The way we write the show, it’s often about the experiences I’ve had with my kids and telling these stories to friends and family. The next thing I know, it’s an episode. Everything is pulled directly from our lives.”

## Managing a Chronic Disease

One story line that Anderson has spared his on-screen self: type 2 diabetes. In 2001, Anderson, 31 at the time, learned he had the disease. He says the diagnosis shocked him, though in hindsight, he recognized the signs.

# “Everything is pulled directly from our lives.”



**Keeping It Real**  
Anthony Anderson with his TV family, the Johnsons.

POURTRAITS: MAARTEN DE BOER/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES; EPISODES: ABC/GETTY IMAGES

## The Heavy Toll of Diabetes

African-Americans bear a much greater diabetes burden than whites, says Robert Gabbay, MD, PhD, chief medical officer of Harvard’s Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston.

Compared to non-Hispanic whites, African-Americans are nearly twice as likely to develop diabetes. African-American women are at particularly high risk. An estimated 1 in 4 black women older than 55 has the disease.

African-Americans also have much higher rates of diabetes-related complications such as kidney failure (2.4 times more common), amputations, such as the removal of a foot or toe (twice

as common), and unhealthy cholesterol levels, which increase the risk for heart disease. And they are twice as likely to die from diabetes.



“I was

taking midday naps, something that I had never done before,” Anderson recalls. “I was developing a television show, I was doing movies—I was fatigued, but I thought that it was just everything catching up to me.”

A doctor at his neighborhood clinic informed him otherwise. After a night during which he consumed five gallons of water—excessive thirst is a hallmark symptom of diabetes—Anderson went for a checkup. Before that, he’d rarely seen a doctor. He regrets that now. A simple blood test in the years leading up to his diagnosis would have sounded alarms about his rising blood sugar level, possibly in time to prevent the disease. That’s a lesson he wants young people to learn.

“Young men especially have to go to the doctor,” says Anderson. “They’ll take their car in for an oil change every 3,000 miles, they’ll care for an inanimate object, but they won’t go get themselves checked out. They need to do that.”

Type 2 diabetes affects African-Americans at nearly twice the rate of non-Hispanic whites, and health experts don’t know all the reasons why, says Robert Gabbay, MD, PhD, chief medical officer of Harvard’s Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston. He points to high rates of obesity as a primary cause, as well as to genetic factors that make African-Americans less sensitive to insulin, another risk factor.

However, says Gabbay, it’s not all grim. “There’s so much people can do to prevent diabetes, to prevent complications,” he says, pointing to a healthy diet and increased exercise as critical components of any diabetes prevention or treatment plan. “That’s one of the most important messages. In large part, it’s an education issue. Not everybody realizes the risks.”

After his diagnosis, Anderson made immediate adjustments to his lifestyle. He ate the same foods but cut the portion sizes. While a good first step, it took him years to commit fully to taking care of himself. He recalls a morning in 2008 when he woke up ready for change.

“Out of the blue, I decided it was time to get serious,” he says.

With exercise and healthy eating, he dropped more than 45 pounds. “In my *Law & Order* dressing room, I looked in the mirror,” says Anderson. “There was a picture of the old me there. I was fat. Not anymore.”

These days, he bikes, he hits the treadmill, he lifts weights, he gardens. He spent time as a vegan but now allows himself fish and chicken along

***“Out of the blue, I decided it was time to get serious.”***

with organic fruits and vegetables. He still loves fried chicken and steak with butter, but both are infrequent treats.

“It’s all about moderation,” he says.

That message, he says, has reached his children. “My kids live healthy lives. They exercise, they run around. I tell them, eat brown rice. Don’t drink soda. You don’t need that.”

### Spreading the Word

Diabetes and other health issues make the occasional cameo on *black-ish*. In one early episode, Andre’s twins refuse their Halloween candy because they’ve just learned about diabetes in school and are now afraid of sugar. In another, Andre’s father, played by Laurence Fishburne, confesses he hasn’t seen a doctor in decades, just like Anderson’s own father, who was diagnosed with diabetes a few years after Anderson and died of complications.

“My father, good old country boy that he was, was like most men,” says Anderson. “He didn’t care to go to the doctor, so we have no idea how long my father had been living with the disease before he was diagnosed.”

Anderson has been an advocate for diabetes awareness for years. In late 2015, he joined an American Diabetes Association Step Out to Stop Diabetes walk in Los Angeles. He continues to spread the word whenever he can.

“I give my testimony,” says Anderson. “It doesn’t matter if you’re on TV, if you’re famous. This can still happen to you, just like it can to anybody. But I also want people to see that you can get through it. No matter who you are, you can make the changes that you have to make and you can beat it.”

### In Hindsight

Before receiving his diabetes diagnosis, Anderson rarely saw a doctor. He regrets that now.



Scan This Page for More  
Take the quiz [Myths and Facts About Type 2 Diabetes](#) at [WebMD.com](#).  
Learn how on page 4.



# YOUR BODY'S INNER ENGINE

NEW RESEARCH PROVIDES KEY INSIGHTS INTO HOW TO KEEP YOUR METABOLISM REVVED UP AND WORKING WELL

BY        *Brenda Goodman*

REVIEWED BY        *Michael W. Smith, MD*

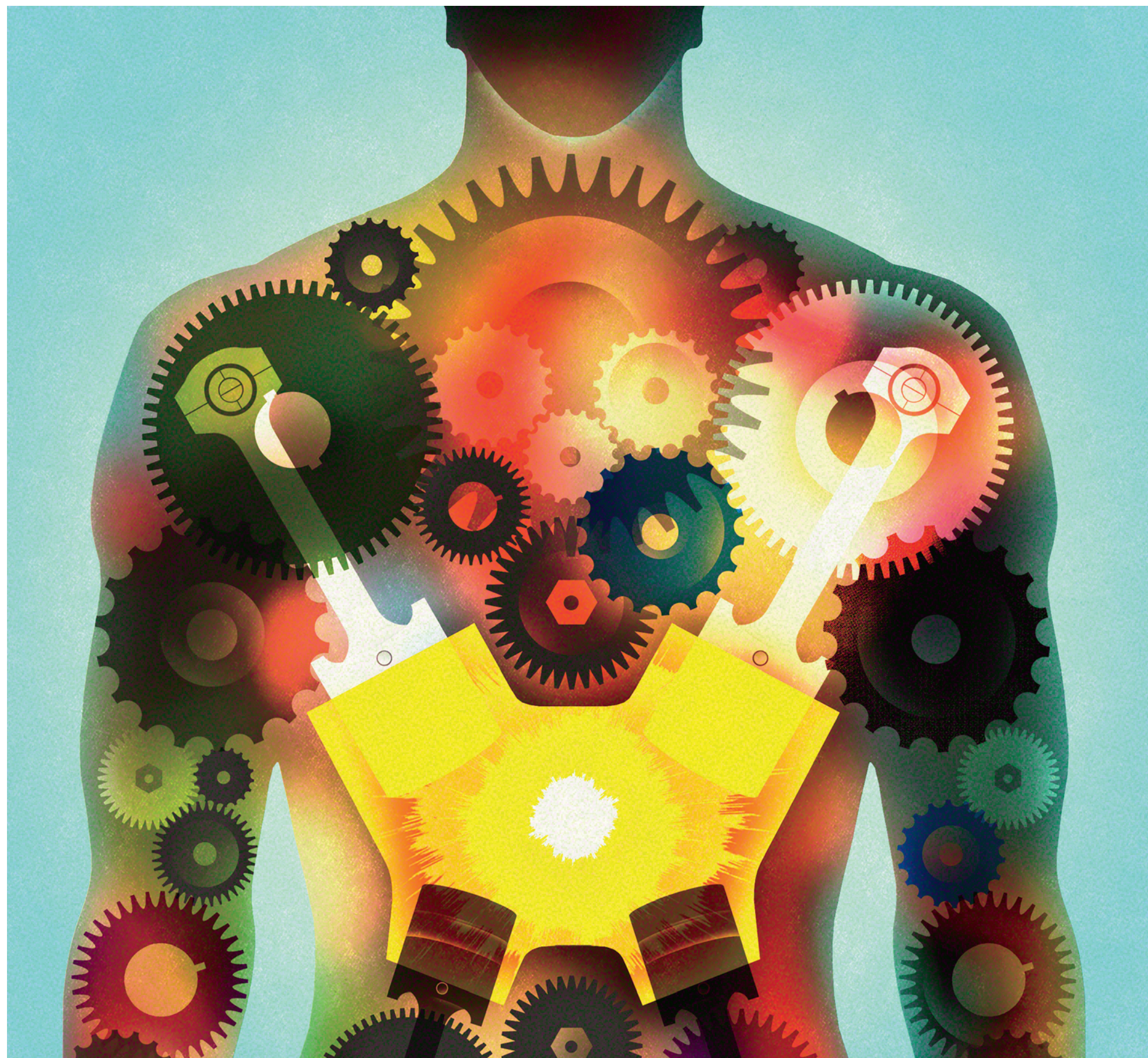
*WebMD Chief Medical Editor*

IF YOU'RE TRYING TO MANAGE YOUR WEIGHT, YOU'LL NEED TO mind your metabolism. What exactly is that? Metabolism, specifically resting metabolism, is the body's engine. It's the energy you burn just to keep your heart beating, your lungs breathing, and your other organs running.

Unless you're an elite athlete, resting metabolism accounts for 60% to 75% of all the calories you burn each day, and it varies a lot from person to person. If you're counting calories, knowing your resting metabolism can help you figure out how much you can eat without gaining weight. People who have a naturally high metabolic rate are able to eat more than people who burn calories at a slower pace.

Sounds great, right? You've got this awesome internal combustion engine that burns hundreds of calories a day without you having to do a single sit-up. However, it's hard to boost your resting metabolism much beyond its natural set point, though slowing it down is possible. Recent research into the body's metabolism helps us better understand how it works. And scientific findings demonstrate some ways to boost your ability to lose weight—and keep it off.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY        *Brian Stauffer*



**Scan This Page for More**  
Check out **10 Ways to Boost Your Metabolism**, a slideshow at [WebMD.com](http://WebMD.com). Learn how on page 4.

1.

## Sleep

The downsides of not enough

Researchers know that short sleep leads to weight gain. People who don't get at least six hours of sleep at night are prone to overeating, and they usually crave starchy, sugary foods.

It turns out that overeating isn't the only issue when you're cheating sleep; not getting enough shut-eye also slows metabolism. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania recently brought 36 healthy adults into their sleep lab. Over five days, half the group was allowed to sleep only four hours a night; the other half got to sleep up to 10 hours at a time.

The sleep-restricted group was active and awake for more hours of the day, but their resting metabolisms slowed by about 50 to 60 calories a day, says senior study





#### → Your Body at Rest

Even when you sleep, your body burns calories.

One way the body resists weight loss is to slow down its resting metabolism. And the more rapid and extreme the weight loss, the more metabolism appears to slow. A recent series of studies shows exactly how dramatic the metabolic slowdown after weight loss can be.

Kevin Hall, PhD, a senior investigator at the NIH's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, spent six years following contestants from season eight of NBC's *The Biggest Loser* reality show. The show pairs obese people with trainers who push them through extreme exercise and suggest daily calorie goals so they quickly lose weight.

At the end of the competition, which lasts for seven months, some people had lost as much as half their starting weight.

The trouble is that their metabolisms slowed even as the pounds flew off. By the end of the show, when they were at their lowest weights, their resting metabolisms had dropped by more than 600 calories a day, on average.

Researchers expected some slowing, but the metabolic plunge was even more than they had predicted. And, also contrary to what the researchers had expected, the contestants' metabolisms never adjusted after their extreme weight loss. In some cases, they slowed even more.

Most of the contestants—13 of 14—regained some of the weight they had lost. Four are heavier now than before they joined the show. Some have said their junk food cravings are still there, though their capacity to burn them off isn't.

"We took a look at this extreme case of very huge lifestyle changes,

huge amounts of weight loss, because we wanted to see how strongly the body responds when you intervene to such a large degree. The answer is pretty darn strongly," Hall says. He thinks that hormones, particularly the hormone leptin, which banishes hunger, may play a role. In a different study, *Biggest Loser* contestants had 80% less leptin at the end of their weight loss than a similar group of people who had lost weight after bariatric surgery. Scientists are testing whether giving leptin injections after weight loss might preserve metabolism and help keep people from regaining the weight.

Until there is a drug that can prevent weight regain, the takeaway message, Ravussin says, is that slow and steady is a better way to lose weight if you want to have the best possible chance of keeping it off.

Even better, Hall says, is to try to change the way you think of weight loss. Instead of dramatically cutting calories and killing yourself at the gym to get to a certain weight, focus on adopting habits you'll be able to stick with over the long haul.

3.

## Protein

More may be better

Hall has conducted experiments to test the idea that all calories are equal, no matter where they come from. With fats and carbohydrates, that seems to be true. But Hall says protein seems to be a different story. "It looks like there might be some benefit to increasing the amount of protein that you eat," he says, though more research is needed before he can say for sure. And he's not certain why protein might boost metabolism, but he has some theories.

The body spends more energy trying to digest and absorb proteins than digesting fats and carbohydrates. "It also might increase metabolic rate, but very slightly. We're not talking about huge increases here," Hall says.

Also, some metabolic benefits may come with diets that switch

# METABOLISM DEMYSTIFIED

MYTHS ABOUT RESTING METABOLISM ABOUND. KEVIN HALL, PhD, A RESEARCHER AT THE NIH'S NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DIABETES AND DIGESTIVE AND KIDNEY DISEASES, HAS HEARD THEM ALL.

+

#### MYTH 1

Eating more frequently, about every three hours, will rev the body's metabolic engine.

Digestion is hard work. It costs the body a certain amount of calories to digest and absorb food. Overall, the body must burn or "spend" about 10% of all the calories you eat every day. The more calories you eat, the more this contributes to your overall calorie burn. "It doesn't matter if you break that up into one meal or three or six," he says. The overall total number of calories, not how often you eat, is what counts.

+

#### MYTH 2

You can blame midlife weight gain on a slower metabolism.

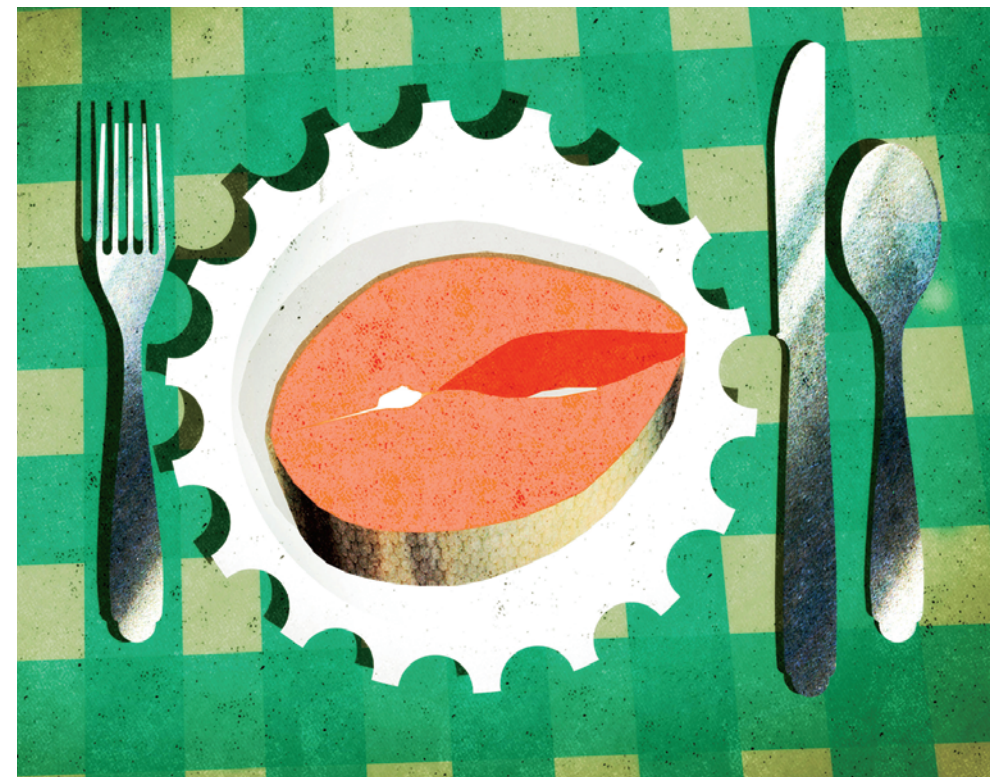
Age doesn't have a big impact on metabolism until your senior years, Hall says. Up until about age 50, metabolism slows about 7 calories for each year of age. So the difference between your metabolism at age 30 compared to age 40 is just 70 calories a day. To make up the difference, increase your physical activity, adjust your daily calories, or both.

+

#### MYTH 3

Building muscle with resistance training will boost your metabolism.

This one is kind of true but not to the degree many people think. Gain a kilogram of muscle—about 2 pounds—and you can expect to burn about 13 more calories a day when you're not exercising. "That's nothing," Hall says. So why would anyone do weight training? Strong muscles help protect your joints and bones. They improve posture and balance. And good muscle tone is a lot more attractive than flab.



↑

#### Eat Right

If you want to lose weight and you cut calories, don't cut your protein intake.

the body's primary fuel source from sugar or carbohydrates to fats. Diets that do this are called ketogenic diets. They tend to be higher in fats or proteins and lower in carbohydrates. In a recent study, Hall had 17 overweight men follow two different low-calorie diets. The first was a diet higher in carbohydrates and lower in fats. The second was a ketogenic diet lower in carbohydrates and

higher in fats. Protein was kept the same between the two diets. The men lost weight on both diets, but their metabolisms were slightly higher on the ketogenic diet.

The message for people looking to lose weight is that if you cut calories, don't cut your protein intake. Eating more protein may help keep your resting metabolism high, which can help you both lose weight and keep it off.

2.

## Weight loss

Slow and steady


When you lose weight, your body fights hard to regain it. Eric Ravussin, PhD, director of the Nutrition Obesity Research Center at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, likens this to what happens when you pull on a spring. "The more you pull your weight away from your natural settling point," he says, "the more your body is going to resist."

*The calorie imbalance just from not sleeping enough was substantial—around 550 calories a day, enough to lead to about a pound of weight gain each week.*

author Namni Goel, PhD. Goel studies sleep medicine at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia. While not a huge amount, "that can add up across multiple nights of sleep restriction," she says.

More concerning is that metabolism sputters just as appetite goes up, Goel says. The study's sleep-restricted volunteers ate about 500 more calories each day, so the total calorie imbalance just from not sleeping enough was substantial—around 550 calories daily, enough to lead to about a pound of weight gain each week.





→ **By Any Other Name**  
Garlic is also known as the “stinking rose.”

**GOOD EATS**

## Go for the Garlic

Each aromatic clove is packed with pungent flavor and powerful disease-fighting compounds

**TIME TO TOLERATE A LITTLE GARLIC BREATH.** RESEARCH suggests that this amazing allium—a relative of onions, shallots, and leeks—may prevent hardening of the arteries, decrease blood pressure, reduce colon cancer risk, and fight bacterial and fungal infections. Garlic's benefits are tied to organosulfur compounds including allicin, responsible for the sharp smell and flavor. You can activate allicin by crushing garlic and allowing it to sit for 10 minutes before cooking. To counter garlic's malodorous effects, munch parsley or spinach, which contain breath-freshening polyphenols. —ERIN O'DONNELL





## FOR THE WEEK

## Versatile Veggies

Root varieties and other cold weather favorites are ripe for roasting

The winter months offer a bounty of vegetables, ready to transform your meals into an endless variety of hearty, healthy dishes. Roast a big bunch on Monday to last all week.

## 1 Day, 5 Dinners

THESE COLORFUL BEAUTIES ARE A STAPLE SIDE DISH, BUT LOOK AT WHAT ELSE YOU CAN DO WITH THEM.



### MONDAY

#### ROASTED VEGETABLES

Cut a head of broccoli into bite-sized florets. Spread on a large sheet pan and set aside. Wash and dice root vegetables such as carrots, rutabaga, parsnips, onions, sweet potatoes, or celery root. Spread onto a sheet pan. Drizzle vegetables with olive oil and a bit of salt and pepper. Roast at 450°F (20 minutes for broccoli, 30–40 minutes for other vegetables). Serve with any protein, such as fish or chicken.

### TUESDAY

#### QUINOA SALAD

Combine cooked quinoa with roasted root vegetables, rinsed canned chickpeas, bagged arugula, and a dressing of olive oil, lemon juice, and Dijon mustard.



### WEDNESDAY

#### PURÉED BROCCOLI SOUP

In a large saucepan, sauté a chopped leek and a minced garlic clove in a tablespoon of olive oil over medium-high heat until translucent. Add roasted broccoli, along with a pinch each of salt, red pepper flakes, and dried rosemary. Cover with low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth and bring to a simmer. Remove from heat and blend (in a blender or in the pot with an immersion blender). Serve with an extra drizzle of olive oil, plain yogurt, and a squeeze of lemon.

### THURSDAY

#### DINNER FRITTATA

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add two cups of roasted vegetables, diced into bite-sized pieces, and a couple handfuls of fresh spinach. Whisk six eggs and pour over the vegetables. Place a lid over the pan, lower the heat, and cook until eggs are firm.



### FRIDAY

#### HEARTY MAC & CHEESE

Cook a box of whole wheat macaroni and cheese according to package instructions. Mix in some roasted broccoli, spread into a baking pan or casserole dish, and sprinkle with Japanese-style panko bread crumbs. Bake in a 350°F oven until bread crumbs turn brown and dish is heated through.







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## OFF THE MENU

# Build a Better Sandwich

Perfect for lunch or dinner, this twist on a go-to staple will satisfy your hunger—with fewer calories and less fat than the original version

THE MENU AT BUNK SANDWICH SHOPS SHOWCASES AN ARRAY OF SUPERBLY mouthwatering sandwiches. Founders Tommy Habetz and Nick Wood promise—and deliver—“big, meaty, and delicious indulgences” at their highly regarded restaurants in Portland, Oregon, and Brooklyn, New York. Their sandwiches are mostly high-calorie treats, but here they offer a slimmed-down version of their fan-favorite chicken salad sandwich with bacon and avocado.



**TOMMY HABETZ  
AND NICK WOOD,  
BUNK FOUNDERS**

## Bunk's Slimmed-Down Chicken Salad Sandwich

## INGREDIENTS

## Chicken Salad

- 12 oz pulled roasted chicken
- 2 tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 2 tbsp minced red onion
- ½ tsp chopped fresh tarragon
- juice ½ lemon
- kosher salt to taste
- black pepper to taste

## Sandwich

- 4 small whole wheat pitas
- ½ avocado, sliced
- 4 slices thick-cut apple-smoked bacon (cooked and cut in half)
- mayonnaise (optional)
- Dijon mustard (optional)

## MAKE IT (SERVES 4)

1. Combine chicken salad ingredients, chill.
2. Divide the chicken salad among the four pitas, first spreading some mayo and Dijon mustard inside the pitas, if desired.
3. Add to each one slice of bacon (two halves) and some avocado.
4. Serve immediately.

**PERSERVING** | 377 calories, 32 g protein, 21 g carbohydrate, 19 g fat (5 g saturated fat), 89 mg cholesterol, 4 g fiber, 1 g sugar, 552 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 45%

## Mighty Mustards

SPICE UP YOUR NEXT SANDWICH WITH ONE OF THESE FAVORITES FROM VAL NEFF-RASMUSSEN, A FOOD FINDER AT ZINGERMAN'S SPECIALTY FOOD BUSINESS IN ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN.



### GULDEN'S SPICY BROWN MUSTARD

“I grew up eating Gulden's, and I still consider it the classic mustard flavor. Dip grilled cheeses in it, or smear it over hot dogs and hamburgers.”



### EDMOND FALLOT DIJON MUSTARD

“A Dijon mustard that actually comes from Dijon, France, Fallot packs a huge flavor punch that will clear your sinuses. Perfect on a turkey sandwich with gooey cheese.”



### KOZLIK'S CANADIAN AMAZING MAPLE MUSTARD

“Made in Toronto with Canadian maple syrup, Kozlik's delivers a blast of sweet heat. It's awesome on a ham sandwich or BLT or drizzled over roasted asparagus.”



### MOUTARDE VIOLETTE

“This violet mustard from southwestern France is purple in color, softly sweet, and loaded with mustard seeds—great with sausages and soft cheeses.”



### RAYE'S DOWN EAST SCHOONER MUSTARD

“For a traditional yellow mustard, you can't beat Raye's. Ground by stone mills, it's a classic on corned beef sandwiches at our deli.”

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## BREAKFAST SMARTS

## Fresh Start

Wake up to the bright, vitamin-packed flavors of fresh herbs—ideal for breakfast dishes to start your day

**1. Mint**

Cooling mint brightens the flavor of green smoothies.

**2. Rosemary**

Add rosemary to a root vegetable hash.

**3. Basil**

Team floral basil with melon balls, balsamic vinegar, and feta for a sweet-savory breakfast salad.

**4. Cilantro**

Cilantro and lime are zesty toppers for breakfast tacos.

**5. Dill**

Fold smoked salmon and dill into scrambled eggs.

**6. Thyme**

Transform oatmeal with a topping of grapefruit sections, olive oil, toasted almonds, and thyme.



## Kids' Box

**PICKY EATER?**

WHY YOU CAN RELAX IF YOUR KIDS AREN'T ENTHUSIASTIC VEGETABLE EATERS.

Don't sweat it if your kid won't eat vegetables, reassures childhood nutrition expert and registered dietitian Jill Castle. The co-author of *Fearless Feeding* says that while you should still offer vegetables to your child (consistently and without pressure), you don't need to panic if he or she shuns them in favor of fruit. "Fruit is almost always a home run, and your child is still getting fiber and other nutrients." Offer fruit at all three meals and focus on variety (citrusfruit, stone fruit, melons, and berries).





# FOOD

BY *Erin O'Donnell*

RECIPES BY *Kathleen Zelman, MPH, RD, LD*

3 WAYS

## Spinach

Go green with the original superfood, packed with folate, fiber, and flavor

SPINACH

+



COTTAGE CHEESE/CHEDDAR  
CHEESE/EGGS/ROASTED RED PEPPER



BAKED SPINACH CAKES

**PER SERVING (3 CAKES)** | 142 calories, 13 g protein, 6 g carbohydrate, 8 g fat (4 g saturated fat), 122 mg cholesterol, 2 g fiber, 3 g sugar, 440 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 48%

1

**MAKE IT** Thaw and drain a box of frozen spinach. Mix with ½ cup each of cottage cheese and cheddar, 2 beaten eggs, chopped roasted red bell pepper, and a sprinkle of garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Bake in a sprayed muffin pan at 400°F for 20 minutes. Cool and serve. **SERVES 4**

SPINACH

+



ORZO/SUN-DRIED TOMATOES/  
YELLOW BELL PEPPER/  
FETA CHEESE/PINE NUTS



SPINACH ORZO

**PER SERVING (1 CUP)** | 265 calories, 9 g protein, 34 g carbohydrate, 12 g fat (3 g saturated fat), 11 mg cholesterol, 2 g fiber, 4 g sugar, 343 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 39%

2

**MAKE IT** Toss cooked whole grain orzo with chopped baby spinach, chopped sun-dried tomatoes, diced yellow pepper, and a little olive oil and vinegar. Season with salt and pepper, and sprinkle with feta cheese and toasted pine nuts. Serve hot, cold, or at room temperature. **SERVES 6**

SPINACH

+



BACON/MUSHROOMS/  
CHERRY TOMATOES/RED ONION/EGG



SPINACH SALAD WITH EGG

**PER SERVING (2 CUPS SALAD WITH 1 EGG)** | 207 calories, 12 g protein, 6 g carbohydrate, 16 g fat (4 g saturated fat), 220 mg cholesterol, 2 g fiber, 3 g sugar, 452 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 66%

3



**Scan This Page for More**  
Check out **13 Easy Ways to Eat More Greens**, a slideshow at [WebMD.com](http://WebMD.com). Learn how on page 4.

**MAKE IT** Top clean baby spinach leaves with crumbled bacon, fresh sliced mushrooms, halved cherry tomatoes, and chopped red onion. Toss salad lightly with olive oil and vinegar. Fry an egg until yolk is set but runny, and place on top of the salad. Serve immediately. **SERVES 1**



**Taste Test**

THESE FIVE BEANS ARE AMONG SANDO'S FAVORITES.

**1. ROYAL CORONA**

Gently cook these fat white beans until they're almost like pudding inside, then spread them on toast and drizzle them with olive oil. "That's my favorite way to serve them," Sando says.

**2. CHRISTMAS LIMAS (AKA, POPE'S BEANS)**

Their chestnut texture and deep flavor distinguish them from the frozen limas most people know, and that's a very good thing, says Sando. Toss them with garlicky sautéed mushrooms.

**3. PINTO BEANS**

Velvety and versatile with a distinct Mexican/Southwestern quality, pinto beans are popular for a reason, says Sando. Serve them on their own, or toss them with bacon and salsa.

**4. CRANBERRY BEANS**

A classic pairing with pasta, these creamy beans yield a rich bean broth. Sando keeps it simple, simmering the beans with onion and garlic and splashing with premium olive oil.

**5. BLACK BEANS**

Super soft, creamy, and slightly exotic, these beans are great added to salads, Sando suggests. Served hot or cold, they produce an inky, delicious bean broth ideal for soup.



**Scan This Page for More**  
Get the recipe **Slow-Cooked Beans** at WebMD.com.  
Learn how on page 4.

**BEANS 101**

# Bean Me Up

From supermarket staples like pintos to exotic heirlooms, beans come in endless sizes, shapes, textures, and tastes

BUY THE FRESHEST DRY BEANS POSSIBLE, SAYS STEVE SANDO OF RANCHO GORDO New World Specialty Food in Napa, California, an heirloom bean shop and supplier. "They cook faster and have a much richer flavor." He strongly advises against using pre-cooked canned beans. "When you cook them yourself, that's when it gets exciting."



**CUTTING EDGE**

## The heart. The hardest- working muscle in the body,

it beats more than 3 billion times in a lifetime, pumping out about 2 ounces of blood with every thump, 2,500 gallons every day

**→ Feel the Beat**

Heart health in the U.S. is on a positive upswing. Research initiatives look to keep up the momentum.

THANKS TO MEDICAL ADVANCEMENTS AND healthier lifestyles, Americans' heart health has improved. Stroke has fallen from the third leading cause of death to the fifth. Heart disease deaths have dropped steadily over the last few decades, too. Several research initiatives aim to keep that trend going.

Scientists at Wake Forest School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, have discovered that an audible version of your brainwaves played back to you via earbuds might lower blood pressure and improve

heart rate variability. High blood pressure can lead to heart attack, stroke, and heart failure. Heart rate variability is the heart's ability to adapt to changes in blood pressure. (As an added perk, the sound therapy might help treat migraines, too.)

Researchers in the United Kingdom are exploring ways to regenerate blood vessels, which could transform the treatment and outlook for heart disease. When plaque blocks the arteries in the heart and slows blood flow, a heart attack may follow. Research to create new blood vessels intends to bypass the blocked arteries and increase blood flow to the heart. One group is reprogramming adult stem cells found in the skin to become blood vessels. Another group is using silk straight from silkworm cocoons to make the vessels. —SONYA COLLINS





**JOHN WHYTE, MD, MPH**  
DIRECTOR OF  
PROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS  
AND STAKEHOLDER  
ENGAGEMENT AT THE FDA

## EXPERT Q&amp;A

## The Lowdown on Generics

Most prescriptions filled in the U.S. are generics. But are they as safe and effective as their name-brand counterparts?



PHARMACISTS USE GENERIC MEDICATIONS TO FILL MANY PRESCRIPTIONS, and generics' popularity will continue to grow as more become available. But what are generics exactly? To start, they must be identical to their name-brand counterparts in strength, dosage, and how you take them. But there's more to the story than just a different name. The FDA's John Whyte explains.

**Q Do generics work as well as their brand counterparts?**

**A** Yes. Generic medications must meet rigorous standards by the FDA to ensure each pill gives you the same drug and concentration as the brand version. Some patients might notice differences, which are typically what patients might see between different batches of a branded medication.

**Q My doctor wrote a prescription for the brand. Can I safely substitute a generic?**

**A** Yes. Virtually every state has adopted laws for pharmacists to substitute generics. But if you prefer, you or your doctor can request the branded medication instead.

**Q Could my body react differently to generics?**

**A** Possibly. You might have an undesired effect or allergic reaction to inactive ingredients such as binders, fillers, or

dyes when switching between medications, such as from brand to generic, generic to brand, or even between two manufacturers. If you have unwanted side effects, let your doctor know.

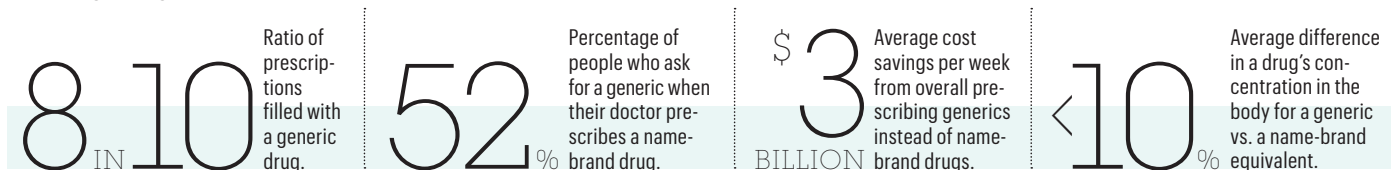
**Q Why do generics cost less if they're the same quality?**

**A** Generics are lower in price—as much as 85% lower—because manufacturers don't have to repeat the same clinical trials as with branded medications. Also, prices may drop when multiple generics come to market from different companies.

**Q How do I find out if a generic is available?**

**A** Not every drug has an approved generic, and not every generic has a brand still available on the market. To find out, check with your pharmacist or go to [Drugs@FDA \(fda.gov/drugsatfda\)](https://www.fda.gov/drugsatfda).

## BY THE NUMBERS





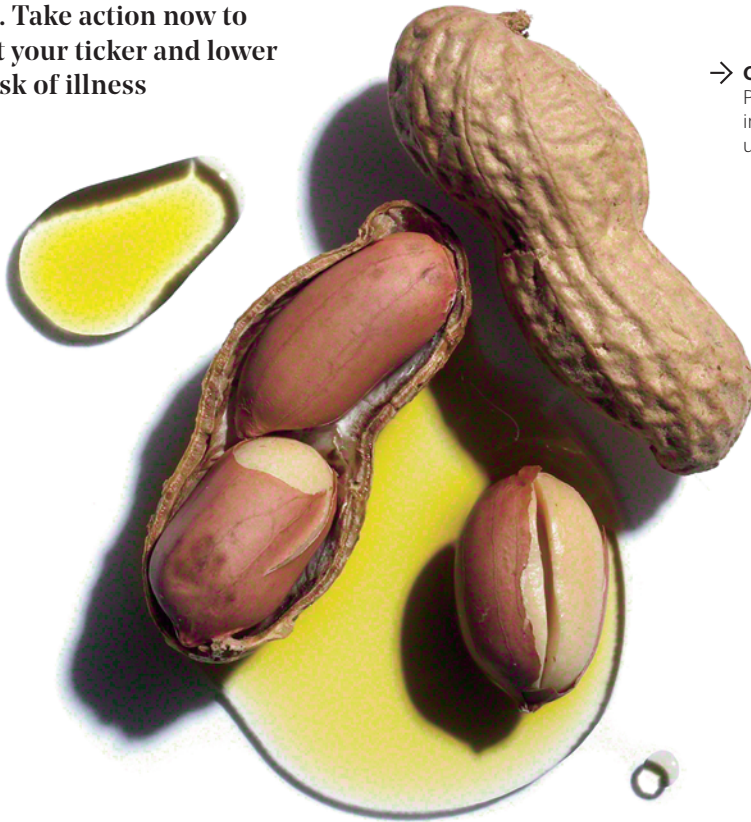


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## LIVING WELL

# Heart Smart

Heart disease still takes an enormous toll on too many people. Take action now to protect your ticker and lower your risk of illness



→ **Oil Change**  
Peanut oil is high in heart-healthy unsaturated fats.

What can you do to help prevent heart disease? First, “be aware of your risk and be proactive,” says Jones. Raise the issue with your doctor and cover your family history as well as individual risk factors such as being overweight and having diabetes, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol. Knowing these can help determine if you might benefit from taking cholesterol-lowering medication or making lifestyle changes, she adds. A few ways you can cut your risk:

## SWAP OUT SATURATED FATS

“Cut out any trans fats in your diet, like hydrogenated oils,” which are often in processed foods, says Jones. Switch saturated fats to heart-healthy mono- and polyunsaturated vegetable fats. Cook with olive or peanut oil and eat less dairy and meat. Choose low-salt meals with lots of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fish.

## GET MOVING

“One of the only natural things that can increase HDL, or good cholesterol, is consistent aerobic exercise,” says Jones. Aim for 75 minutes of strenuous exercise or 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week. “You want to be winded and sweaty for moderate exercise, but not gasping,” she says. Good choices include brisk walking or biking.

## LIGHTEN UP

Exercise and a good diet can help you lose weight, and lower cholesterol and blood pressure. “Even a 5% weight loss changes your risk of heart disease significantly,” says Jones. “Exercise has so many positive effects. Just move your body every single day.”

YOU MAY NOT REALIZE THAT HEART DISEASE KILLS MORE AMERICANS THAN all cancers combined, according to the American Heart Association. “In America, one person every 40 seconds dies of cardiovascular disease,” says Erica Jones, MD, director of HeartHealth, a Program of the Dalio Institute of Cardiovascular Imaging at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York City.

## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

### Q What is my risk of heart disease?

“It sounds like an easy question, but it’s not,” says Jones. Talk to your doctor to assess your individual risk.

### Q How does my family history affect my risk of heart disease?

“If you have a family member who had early heart disease, or who died from a heart attack or stroke, that’s very significant,” says Jones.

### Q Do I need cholesterol-lowering medication?

That depends. But if you have a family history of high cholesterol or other risk factors, lifestyle changes alone may not be enough.

### Q How does sleep affect my risk of heart disease?

Getting enough sleep is important for heart health, says Jones. So is treatment for sleep apnea, if you have that condition.



# HEALTH HAPPENINGS

Products, Ideas & Promotions for Healthy Living

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## Do You Want To See Better While Driving At Night?

When it comes to headlights, you have choices. Sylvania's SilverStar ULTRA headlights help you see farther, wider, and better at night. They're a smart choice for you and your family.

[Sylvania-Automotive.com](http://Sylvania-Automotive.com)



## When You Buy Nature Made, You're Buying Quality.

Nature Made works with USP, an independent organization that tests for quality and purity. Nature Made is the #1 pharmacist recommended vitamin and supplement brand.\*

[NatureMade.com/USP](http://NatureMade.com/USP)

\*Based on a survey of pharmacists who recommend branded vitamins and supplements.



## Immune Support Never Tasted This Good

Sambucol® is trusted by millions worldwide. The new Sambucol Black Elderberry Gummies are pectin based, free from artificial colors and flavors. Suitable for vegetarians and vegans, each gummy has less than 1 gram of sugar.

[SambucolUSA.com](http://SambucolUSA.com)



## WebMD Diabetes Tablet

Download WebMD Diabetes for FREE! This interactive tablet issue is useful for people living with the disease and those who care for them. Find it inside the WebMD Magazine app.

[Available on the App Store](#)





## QUIZ

## Healthy Eyes

Millions of Americans are at risk for vision loss from diseases like cataracts and glaucoma. How healthy is your sight? Take this quiz to find out



↑  
**Focus on Eye Health**  
To safeguard your vision, be on the lookout for common symptoms of eye disease.

## Quiz

1

I have no vision symptoms, but I'm over 40.

\_\_\_ YES  
\_\_\_ NO

2

I have a difficult time reading small print.

\_\_\_ YES  
\_\_\_ NO

3

My vision is blurry and colors look faded.

\_\_\_ YES  
\_\_\_ NO

4

I have trouble recognizing people's faces.

\_\_\_ YES  
\_\_\_ NO

5

I have diabetes and have floating spots in my vision.

\_\_\_ YES  
\_\_\_ NO

6

My eyes feel scratchy, burning, or gritty.

\_\_\_ YES  
\_\_\_ NO

## Answers

**1.** Your eyes could be healthy, but get tested to be sure. Glaucoma—eye pressure that can lead to blindness—often starts without symptoms. **2.** Holding your phone at arm's length is a sign of presbyopia, a loss of close vision that comes with age. Reading glasses or bifocals can help. **3.** You could have cataracts, a clouding of the eye's lens. Glasses might help, but eventually you'll need surgery. **4.** Trouble seeing faces could signal age-related macular degeneration, which damages central vision. The AREDS (Age-Related Eye Disease Study) vitamin formulation can slow dry AMD from progressing to the more serious wet form. **5.** High blood sugar can harm blood vessels in the eye and cause diabetic retinopathy. Control your blood sugar and see your eye doctor annually. **6.** You could have dry eye syndrome—too few or poor quality tears. Artificial tears, drops to increase tear production, and plugs to keep moisture in your eyes can help.

## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

**Q How often should I get an eye exam?**

If your eyes are healthy, get a checkup once in your 20s, twice in your 30s, at 40, and then every year or two after 65. If you have vision issues or health problems like diabetes, see an eye doctor more often.

**Q What are signs of a vision problem?**

Look for symptoms like eye pain, blurred or double vision, flashes or spots in your view, extreme light sensitivity, or a sudden change in vision.

**Q Am I at risk for eye diseases?**

Older age; a family history of glaucoma, cataracts, or other eye diseases; and conditions like diabetes, obesity, and high blood pressure can put you at risk. Go over your medical history with your eye doctor.

**Q What can I do to protect my sight?**

Eat foods with plenty of vitamins and omega-3 fatty acids, wear sunglasses, don't smoke, and treat diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure.





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## CHECKUP

BY *Kristen Fridinger*

REVIEWED BY *Hansa Bhargava, MD*  
WebMD Medical Editor

### MY STORY

# Healthy Moves

How ballroom dancing helped a mother and daughter improve their fitness and overall well-being



→ **Having a Ball**  
This pair is living proof that you don't have to live in the gym to get in shape.

FROM THE DAY SHE WAS BORN, MY DAUGHTER SIERRA WAS exceptional in many ways, her measurements included. She was in the 97th percentile for height and weight. We thought her weight percentile would come down as she grew and became more active. But though she played soccer and took ballet, tap, and jazz, she never really found an activity that connected with her.

As elementary school began, we watched Sierra's energy levels decline. She came home, plopped in front of the TV, and asked for a snack. She asked for food more frequently, and I worried that she was eating out of boredom.

Looking back now, I see how my then-husband and I influenced her food choices and weight. We were both working, stressed,

*"Dancing and changing our eating habits gave us energy and a passion for life, which was missing for us both."*

and short on time. We made poor food choices for convenience. Sierra loved chicken nuggets, French fries, cookies, ice cream, and brownies. Breakfast wasn't much better, often mini muffins or Pop-Tarts.

In fourth grade, Sierra didn't talk about her weight, but she'd have days where she'd try on clothes and say, "None of this looks good on me. My tummy's too big." When she was 9, we started to get concerned; she had no energy and her cholesterol numbers were borderline.

In January 2014, a friend offered to take us both to a guest party at a Fred Astaire dance studio. Sierra took to ballroom dance immediately and took one lesson a week, then quickly moved to two lessons. After about a year, she became part of an amateur couple with a young boy at the studio. Soon they were performing showcases and dancing in mini matches together.

Last year, we started noticing health changes. She looked trimmer; her weight had stabilized even after she had grown 2 inches. Her cholesterol is in the normal range.

Like Sierra, I ballroom dance as well. I fell in love with it and started to dance competitively. I won my first National Champion title in 2015. I've also lost 50 pounds since I started dancing.

Now we eat healthy together. We don't eat large dinners. And while we don't severely restrict Sierra's diet, we focus on healthy proteins, fruits and vegetables, and food in moderation. Desserts are special occasions. Sierra likes healthy foods.

Taking on ballroom dancing and changing our eating habits gave us energy and a new passion for life—something that was missing for us both.

### DOs AND DON'Ts

DO

"Find an activity that your children enjoy, one that gets them out of the house, motivates them, and gives them goals."

DON'T

"Bring trigger foods into the house. If your child's weak spot is ice cream, go out for it as a special treat. Don't have it on hand."

DO

"Acknowledge your child's accomplishments. Praise a good choice that wouldn't have previously been made or a goal that was realized."

DO

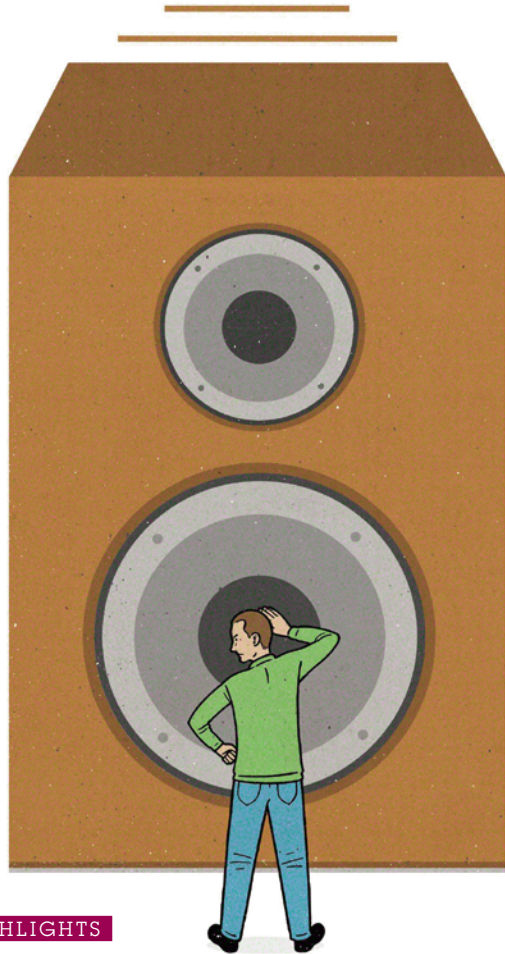
"Model the eating behaviors you want for your child. Be healthy together."





Scan This Page For More  
Watch **Headphones and Hearing Loss**, a video at WebMD.com.  
Learn how on page 4.

**Listen Up** ←  
Hearing loss isn't  
just happening in  
older people.



## HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

## Now Hear This

One in five Americans—one in three Americans older than 65—has some hearing loss. If you count yourself among them, numerous options can make life easier, including some lifestyle changes you can make on your own.

### How to Cope With Hearing Loss

TAKE CHARGE WITH THESE 10 LIFESTYLE TIPS.

#### 1. GET EVALUATED

If you haven't yet seen a doctor, schedule an appointment today.

#### 2. OWN IT

Accept that you have hearing loss; only then can you learn to live with it. See an audiologist for treatment options.

#### 3. PLAN AHEAD

Before a lecture or meeting where you're afraid you might miss something, arrange for a note taker and study the topic in advance.

#### 4. GIVE INSTRUCTIONS

When talking with others, ask them to face you and to talk more loudly and more slowly.

#### 5. RESERVE SEATS

In a restaurant or when making reservations, request a table in a quiet, well-lit area.

#### 6. DON'T BE SHY

If you think you may have misunderstood what was said, say something.

#### 7. TALK ABOUT IT

Hearing loss is difficult, so seek counseling if you often feel down or like giving up.

#### 8. QUIET THE DISTRACTIONS

Before a conversation, turn off background noise like the TV, radio, or stereo.

#### 9. BECOME A MASTER

Practice speech reading everywhere and often to improve your conversation and comprehension.

#### 10. ENLIST HELP

If you think you need a hearing aid, get help from a trained professional, such as an audiologist.

## EXPERT TIPS:



*"If your hearing loss can't be treated with medication or surgery, high-quality hearing aids, implantable auditory devices, Cochlear implants, and other devices will almost always help. These devices are very powerful, appear relatively inconspicuous, improve quality of life, and are covered by most insurance carriers."*

**Darius Kohan, MD**

director of otology/neurology, Lenox Hill Hospital, and Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital, New York City



*"Recognize the early signs of hearing loss, such as ringing in the ear. Untreated hearing loss, which requires more effort and energy to hear and communicate, can increase your fatigue and stress, and eventually lead to social isolation and depression."*

**Pamela Mason, MEd, CCC-A**  
director of audiology professional practices, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Rockville, Maryland



*"At times when your family members or friends cannot hear or understand what you are saying, think outside the box. Rather than trying to talk, text them your messages, type them on a computer screen, or write them on a piece of paper."*

**Tina Penman, AuD, CCC-A, FAAA**  
research audiologist, National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, Oregon



## BY THE NUMBERS: Facts and Stats on Trending Health Topics

## Thyroid Diseases

12%

Percentage of Americans who will develop a thyroid condition in their lifetime

60%

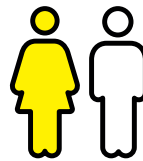
Percentage of Americans who are living with a form of thyroid disease and don't know it

<1  
OUNCE

Weight of your thyroid gland

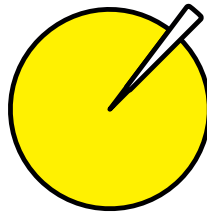
98%

5-year survival rate of people with thyroid cancer



5x-8x

Increased likelihood of a woman developing a thyroid disease versus a man



1 IN 100

Number of people with hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid)

5 IN 100

Number of people with hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid)

62,450

Number of new cases of thyroid cancer diagnosed in the U.S. in 2016

250,000

Number of thyroid nodules detected in the U.S. each year, usually without symptoms and benign

\$4.3 BILLION

Cost of treating thyroid disease in women each year

20 MILLION

Americans who have some form of thyroid disease today

3x

Increase in thyroid cancers during the last three decades





## Joe Haden

NFL Player for Cleveland Browns, 27, Cleveland, Ohio and Encino, California

1

### What helps you stay in peak condition on the field?

I eat really well. I have an in-house chef for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I tell him: organic, high-protein, low-carb. My favorite? Barbecue drumsticks. It's like, "Oh my goodness, let me get seven of them!"

2

### What's your best health habit?

Willpower. I stay away from sweets, chocolate, and ice cream. I do like sodas, but I don't get tempted too easily. I haven't had soda in about four years.

3

### Worst habit?

Eating really late. At 11:30 or 12, I'll have a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich with milk, or strawberries and pineapples. I crush that and go to sleep.

4

### What's your favorite body part?

My arms. I got them nice and tattooed up. They look kind of sweet, kind of toned, rather pumped. I'm happy with my body, the way it came out.

5

### You're a Special Olympics Global Ambassador. What inspired you?

My brother Jake. He plays bocce ball and runs track in



the Special Olympics. He gets so excited when me and my brothers—there are five of us—watch. I see how happy those kids are no matter what—win, lose, draw. Getting involved was a no-brainer.

6

### What's Jacob's disability?

He has a cognitive disability with his speech. He's had it since he was born. He understands everything perfectly. It's just the delivery—he can't get out what he wants to say.

7

### Best health advice you ever received?

Too much of anything is a bad thing. Keep things in moderation and everything will be all right.

8

### Which coach's advice stuck with you?

Coach Hugh Jackson said, "Effort is between you and you." You can't fake it. Only you know if you're going your hardest.

9

### Is it true you own more than 1,200 pairs of sneakers?

Yes! I just love having on a fresh pair of kicks. Growing up in Maryland, if you had on the fresh J's [Air Jordans], you were the coolest kid on the block. When I made it to the NFL, I was able to buy whatever shoes I wanted. I was like, "I'm about to have the best shoe game."

10

### Do you worry about brain injuries from football?

Not really. It's a high-contact game, but the NFL has taken precautions and the game has shifted. Everybody's hitting a lot lower. They have a concussion protocol. I definitely respect that people would step out. But it's the game I love. It's my passion.

—KARA MAYER ROBINSON

*"Effort is between you and you. You can't fake it. Only you know if you're going your hardest."*