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January/February 2015 / \$4.99

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THE BELL CURVE

Actor Kristen Bell on
keeping motherhood,
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Bell Curve

We're ringing in the New Year with **Kristen Bell**, best known as Veronica Mars, the *Gossip Girl* narrator, and Anna from *Frozen*. But at home, the *House of Lies* star shines as mom of two. She walks the walk when it comes to healthy living habits and sharing them with her kids, and she opens up about her "No Kids Policy," which shields her kids from paparazzi and the media. And it's not just her own kids she seeks to protect: Bell explains her work with This Bar Saves Lives, which supports the global food charity Save the Children.

Mind Games

Can you train your brain? A whole industry says you can make your brain faster and smarter. But do the apps and programs really work? We take a look at the evidence.



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“ I KNOW HUNDREDS OF GREAT CAUSES, BUT IF SOMETHING WAS GOING TO AFFECT MY DAUGHTER, I NEEDED TO TAKE ACTION. ”

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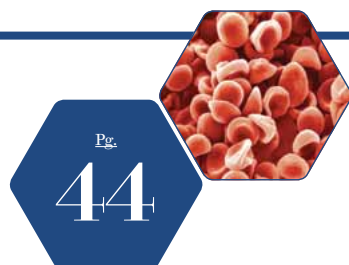
TAKE 10

Not everything's black and white for **Marcia Gay Harden**. The actor opens up about being a single mom, aging well, and staying fit.

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WEBMD CHECKUP

January is National Blood Donor Month. Learn more. • **HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS:** Protect yourself from cervical cancer with monitoring and screening tips. • **LIVING WITH:** Back pain. Get relief with alternative therapies. • **MY STORY:** A reader shares his incredible weight-loss journey and how he shed half his body weight. • **BY THE NUMBERS:** We take a closer look at cold and flu. • **HEALTH CHECK:** Women's heart attacks are different. Do you know the signs? Take the quiz to find out.



This past year was a busy one in health. Ongoing research and new hope countered crises here and abroad. What does the future hold? We're full of optimism as we enter 2015. In fact, we plan to bring you a special report in the year ahead on WebMD.com and in the pages of the magazine. It will feature some of the most promising advances in the world of health. Amid all of the medical challenges and hardships we face, I am inspired when I read about the amazing research and potential breakthroughs that are investigated every day to improve health care. I hope you are too, and that you can channel that inspiration to meet your own health goals.

A new year is a good time to examine goals. They can help give that healthy glow actor **Kristen Bell** radiates—and like she tells us in this issue (page 28), the key is finding ways to tailor healthy habits to your own individual lifestyle.

Here at WebMD, our goal is to help you live your healthiest life. We're focused this year, as always, on improving our site experience, connecting you with our experts and each other, and looking for new stories to tell. We hope you share yours with us in the year ahead. Happy New Year.

Kristy
Kristy Hammam
Editor in Chief
kristy@webmd.com



GMA anchor Robin Roberts was the emcee for the night.

FIRST ANNUAL WEBMD HEALTH HEROES GALA

On November 6, WebMD hosted its first-ever Health Hero Awards Gala at the Times Center in New York. Hosted by *Good Morning America* co-anchor **Robin Roberts**, the star-studded event paid tribute to activists, visionaries, and pioneers in health care whose innovation and dedication have helped people around the world lead healthier lives. WebMD awarded heroes in six categories, including People's Choice, which was presented to **Martha Stewart**. The biggest tribute of the

night went to **Michael J. Fox**; the Hall of Fame winner was recognized for his dedication to research and advocacy for Parkinson's disease.

Other celebrities were on hand to present the rest of the night's awards—*American Idol* winner **Jordin Sparks**, celebrity chef **Rocco Dispirito**, TV personality **Beth Stern**, and *Curb Your Enthusiasm* star **Susie Essman**. Grammy-nominated artist **Gavin DeGraw** entertained the crowd, performing three of his hits.



From left: Roberts; Claire Meunier of the Michael J. Fox Foundation, who accepted the Hall of Fame Award on his behalf; Dr. Frank A. Papay, Scientist winner; Zarin Ibrat Rahman, Prodigy winner; Dr. Harold S. Koplewicz, Activist winner; Jennifer Tedeschi and Julia Parker-Dickerson, KidsGardening.org, who accepted the Philanthropist award on behalf of Carson Daly.

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HOT TOPICS!

FACTS AND NEWS YOU CAN USE

Happy New Year!

In the past five years, 57% of people who made a New Year's resolution to lose weight succeeded. Almost half lost 10 to 29 pounds.

Source: Thomson Reuters-NPR Health Poll



People who got a flu vaccine during the 2013–2014 flu season were 60% less likely than unvaccinated people to visit a doctor for flu treatment.



Source: CDC

Percentage of people who successfully **QUIT** smoking as the result of a New Year's resolution in the past five years.



36%

Source: Thomson Reuters-NPR Health Poll



TOP BREAKFAST FOOD TREND IN 2014:
ETHNIC-INSPIRED, SUCH AS
ASIAN-FLAVORED SYRUPS,
CHORIZO SCRAMBLED EGGS, AND
COCONUT MILK PANCAKES

Source: National Restaurant Association

The number of people with glaucoma is expected to increase **58% by 2030** to 4.2 million Americans.

Source: Glaucoma Research Foundation



Less than **5%** of adults get the **recommended 30 minutes** of physical activity per day.

Source: President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition

Number of hospital stays per year attributed to birth defects:
139,000

Source: CDC



THIS YEAR, ALMOST HALF OF ALL VALENTINE'S DAY GIFT-GIVERS **WILL BUY CANDY** FOR THE OBJECT OF THEIR AFFECTION.

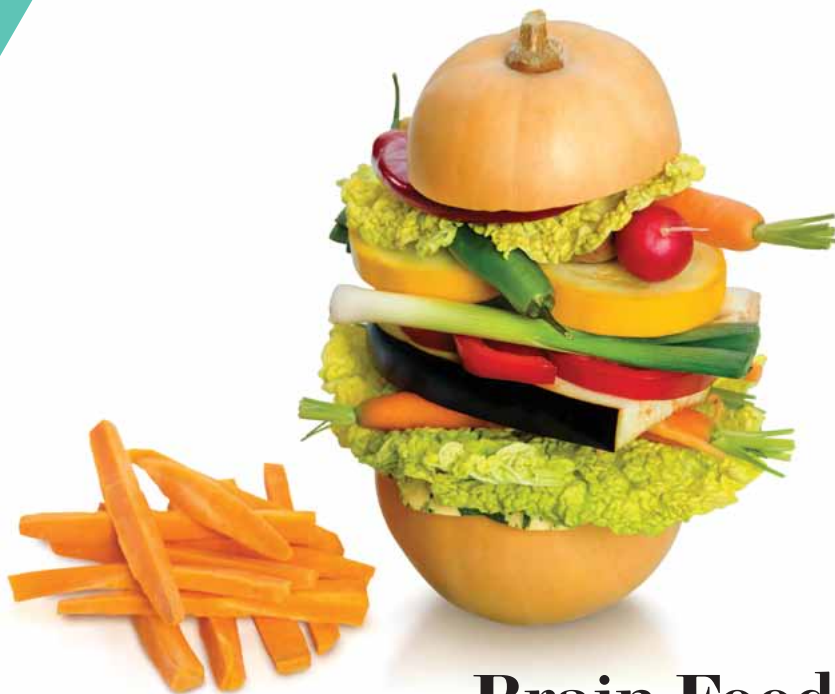
Source: National Retail Federation



1.5%
Percentage of 1-year-olds who've been to a dentist at least once

Source: National Children's Oral Health Foundation





Brain Food

Do you struggle to swap those chips for carrots?

A new study shows that your brain could learn to crave healthier foods.

In an experiment, researchers took brain scans of overweight adults while they looked at pictures of food. The brain's reward system was activated most when people saw high-calorie foods. Half of those adults then started a six-month diet. After six months, all had brain scans again. In the brains of the dieters, researchers saw more activation in response to low-calorie foods and less activation for high-calorie foods. But their non-dieting peers didn't show such a change.

Source: Nutrition & Diabetes



4

Cups of coffee consumed each day by members of the top coffee-drinking professions: journalists, police officers, and teachers

Source: Pressat

TOOTH TALK

Pediatricians now recommend parents use fluoride toothpaste as soon as baby's first tooth appears. Doctors once suggested holding off on fluoride until age 2 to reduce the risk of fluorosis, white streaks that appear on teeth after exposure to large amounts of fluoride during the first few years of life. Scientific evidence shows, however, that a little fluoride can go a long way to prevent cavities without increased risk of fluorosis. Use a smear no larger than a grain of rice as soon as a tooth appears. From age 3 on, use a pea-sized dab.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics



FACE TIME

What would happen if you took screens away from your kids for a few days? They might be better able to read your face. About 100 preteens took a test to interpret the emotions of people in photos and silent videos. Then half the kids went to an outdoors camp for five days, where they had no access to screens and lots of opportunity for social interaction. After camp, all the kids took the test again. The campers significantly improved their test scores compared with their peers.

Source: Computers in Human Behavior

SPRAY DAY

Great news for kids everywhere! This flu season, the CDC recommends that kids ages 2 to 8 get the nasal spray flu vaccine instead of a shot if both are available. Both forms are effective, but the nasal spray could help prevent up to 50% more cases of the flu in this age group. For those older than 8 who aren't so crazy about needles, anyone 2 to 49 years old can get the spray.

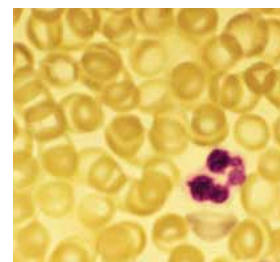
Source: CDC



Calorie Count

Trying to cut calories? Some major brands are, too. Sixteen food companies that voluntarily pledged in 2007 to sell 1.5 trillion fewer calories collectively by 2015 have already surpassed that goal. Together, the companies have reduced the total calories they contribute to the U.S. food market each year by more than 6 trillion. The companies launched new lower-calorie products and changed ingredients and portion sizes of existing products. That's about 78 calories per person per day. Among the brands are Bumble Bee, Campbell's Soup, General Mills, Kellogg's, Kraft, Post, Hillshire Brands, Coca-Cola, and Pepsi. Packaged foods and beverages account for two-thirds of the calories Americans consume.

Source: American Journal of Preventive Medicine



AT FIRST LIGHT

Doctors may soon catch cancer earlier. Researchers have designed a blood test to help identify people who have cancer and pre-cancer of the lungs and colon and melanoma with nearly 100% accuracy. When researchers exposed white blood cells to ultraviolet light, which damages DNA, they found damage in the cells of people with cancer and pre-cancer far more than in the cells of healthy people. Studying DNA damage in white blood cells allowed the researchers to identify people with cancer and pre-cancer. One day doctors might use this test first before more invasive screenings.

Source: Journal of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

IN A NUTSHELL

Here's a nutty idea: A serving and a half of nuts each day could help keep the doctor away. People who eat about a quarter cup of tree nuts such as almonds, cashews, pecans, or pistachios every day have lower levels of fat and sugar in their blood, which could mean a reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes. Researchers came to this conclusion when they compared the results of about 50 studies that included more than 2,000 people.

Source: British Medical Journal



HEALTHY
START



TOMATO, TOMAHTO

Bring out the marinara! Or tomatoes in any form. Men who eat more than 10 servings of tomatoes per week could **reduce their prostate cancer risk by 18%**, compared with men who eat 10 servings or fewer. Researchers believe the secret in the sauce is lycopene, the antioxidant that gives tomatoes their color and has stopped cancer cell growth in animals. A serving of tomatoes is about 3 ounces.

Source: Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention

45% of Americans make New Year's resolutions; **8% are successful at keeping them.**

Source: University of Scranton

WebMD.com

Hot Hits

What's trending on WebMD.com right now*

Iron-rich foods

What do dreams mean?

Wheat belly diet

Butt exercises

What is walking pneumonia?

Sugar addiction

Can foods cause heartburn?

Vitamin D

What are beauty balms?

Is juicing healthy?

*as of Oct. 1, 2014

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Human desire for a long life and a sharp brain to go along with it has been around as long as our ancestors first contemplated a life well lived. Today, with scientific advancements making news almost daily, our brains and bodies seem poised for unprecedented longevity. The brain in particular is the research darling of the moment, the subject of numerous million-dollar studies.

Meanwhile, can you do anything today to improve your brain? Is it possible to strengthen your brain cells so you can remember and think like your younger self, or maybe even better than ever? A number of brain-training companies offer apps, games, and programs to help you do just that.

Do they work? The answer turns out to be not yes or no but a more nuanced “maybe” and “stay tuned.” One of the issues to figure out, researchers say, is the difference between a brain that can be trained to perform better—for example, at playing games—and a brain that is smarter. The two are not quite the same.

For the whole story, turn to our feature on page 34.

Colleen

Colleen Parety
Editorial Director
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Diet Act

When it comes to young girls watching their weight, a new study says, “Watch out.” Researchers asked more than 1,300 college-age women how old they were when they started their first diet. Some women started dieting as early as age 3; others not until their mid-20s. Over the next 10 years, the women who’d started dieting earliest were more likely to use extreme weight control strategies and to become overweight or obese. They also drank more alcohol and were more likely to abuse it than those who started dieting later in life.

Source: Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior

Estimated number of
U.S. children with autism
spectrum disorder:

Source: CDC

1 in 68



STATE OF TEEN DRIVING

Worried about setting your teen free behind the wheel? Some states are safer than others for new drivers.

A study ranked these states best:

1. New York
2. Hawaii
3. Illinois

And these states worst:

48. Nebraska
49. Mississippi
50. South Dakota

Ranking criteria included the number of teen drivers on the road, the number of teen driver fatalities, and the number of driving-under-the-influence violations by teens.

Source: WalletHub



Social Study

A supportive social network can help you feel happier and cope better in life. But the recent growth of social media calls this wisdom into question. When all goes well, social media users feel emotionally supported by their online network.

However, social media can also make people feel alone as they watch others engage in a full life, says

Leslie Becker-Phelps, PhD, author of WebMD's The Art of Relationships blog and the book *Insecure in Love: How Anxious Attachment Can Make You Feel Jealous, Needy, and Worried and What You Can Do About It*. When you think about being active in social media, ask yourself how doing so affects you—in both good and bad ways: Do you feel more emotionally supported with it? Does it inspire you to take on meaningful activities? Does it make you feel sad, lonely, or left out? Does it make you envious? Does it tend to make you unhappy in other ways? Does it interfere with face-to-face time you could be spending with others? Does it take you away from other, more meaningful activities? If you find that social media enhances your life, stay logged on. However, if you notice some disturbing links between your unhappiness and using social media, take a step back. Log out for a while—a day, days, or even weeks. Consider how what you do during the day affects your happiness and satisfaction with life. Then make a conscious decision about what role you would like social media to play in your life.

Mountain Man

We pound the pavement to get expert answers to your pressing health questions.

Photograph by Andrew Maguire Photography

FATHER TIME

"To make the transitions with your son less abrupt, the nonprimary caregiver should schedule quality one-on-one time with him. It doesn't have to be an over-the-top activity, like a trip to Disneyland. It just needs to be nurturing, focused time with the child without electronic distractions such as smartphones and laptops. Spending quality time together as a family when the three of you are home should also help."



Sherrie Bourg-Carter, PsyD
psychologist, children's stress specialist

GAIN GROUND

"Your body needs time to adjust to high altitude. Stay well hydrated—drink just enough until your urine is clear. Ginkgo biloba may improve circulation, and some people find it helps. Avoid alcohol because it speeds breathing and will make you feel worse. Also, limit physical activity until you've adjusted."



Michael W. Smith, MD
WebMD chief medical editor

LIVING
HEALTHY

SUN DANCE

"Every morning, begin your routine with a sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher that contains high-quality minerals such as zinc or titanium. It's still key to reapply sun protection every two hours while you're outdoors.

Many companies, such as ColoreScience and iS Clinical, now make sunscreen powder 'sticks' that allow for easy reapplication, even while you're on the chairlift."



Mohiba K. Tareen, MD
medical director, Tareen Dermatology,
Roseville, Minn.

FUEL UP

"Large meals and alcohol can wreak havoc on your digestive system and make you feel sluggish. Eat a lighter dinner at an earlier hour and limit yourself to one to two drinks with plenty of water. Get a good night's sleep and energize in the morning with a large glass of water and a nourishing breakfast that includes protein, carbs, and fiber."



Kathleen Zelman, MPH, RD, LD
WebMD director of nutrition

WEBMD ON THE STREET

Ben Roberts

Training and programs supervisor,
Snowsports School, 39
Keystone, Colo.

Ben Roberts was just 7 when his family took him skiing for the first time near their home in upstate New York. He was hooked. Roberts tried a 9-to-5 job, but the mountains' lure was too strong. "I've always been able to find something I love about skiing that gets me out of bed and out onto the mountain," he says. The climate doesn't always agree with his skin, though. "I constantly take my gloves off to help my students and develop painful cracks on my fingertips." The sun is another foe, and Roberts' tight work schedule prevents him from reapplying sunscreen often enough. "Are there any sunscreen products I can apply when I get out of the shower that will protect me all day?" To handle the physical demands of his job, Roberts needs to be in top form. Sometimes after a big dinner and a couple of drinks the night before, "I feel a little fuzzy on the slopes and my performance is off." Working at 11,000 feet has its challenges, too, especially his first time up the mountain each season. "I have a tough time re-acclimating. What can I do to prepare myself for the altitude change?" Roberts also needs to prep his 5-year-old son for season's start, when his wife takes over caregiving. "What can we do to ease the transition and maintain a sense of normalcy for him?"

—Stephanie Watson



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Check out **Surprising Ways Smoking Affects Your Looks and Life**, a top slideshow at WebMD.com.

[LEARN HOW ON PAGE 4](#)

LIVING
HEALTHY

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Quitting Time

ARE YOU READY TO KICK THE HABIT? HERE'S HOW TO DO IT FOR GOOD

By Sonya Collins

● Congratulations!
● You've decided to quit smoking. But how? The answer ultimately depends on why you smoke.

Women's cigarette cravings are often more about external triggers than nicotine. "Men smoke more for the effect of the nicotine. Women smoke more to regulate mood and stress," says Kelly P. Cosgrove, PhD, associate professor of psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine. So a good quitting strategy for women includes more than nicotine replacement.

That's because the female brain responds to nicotine differently than the male brain. Nicotine-replacement therapy (NRT)—patches, gum, nasal sprays, and inhalers—helps more men than women quit long-term. In the first six months of quitting, NRT often helps women, but they usually need additional strategies to kick the habit for good.

Other medications, such as antidepressants, may help. Bupropion (Zyban or Wellbutrin) helps some people quit whether or not they're depressed. When you start taking bupropion a week or two before your last cigarette, the mood-stabilizing effects can make quitting easier. Varenicline (Chantix), a nicotine-free medication that helps curb nicotine cravings, also



FRESH START

1. **Set a quit-smoking date with your doctor. You can make a new start at the beginning of the week. How about on a Monday?**
2. **Do you have a stressful event coming up? A class reunion? A family wedding? You might want to quit after that's over.**
3. **Women who stop smoking during the first 14 days of their menstrual cycle may have less intense cravings and irritability associated with quitting. Day one is the first day of your period.**

works as well for women as for men.

Tell everyone you know that you're quitting. "It helps to have someone you can talk to about it every day," Cosgrove says. This could be a friend or a counselor. Quitline coaches in your state can help you devise a quit-smoking plan, keep you on track, and point you toward counseling and other resources. Online communities offer great support, too.

If you've decided to quit on Monday, spend the week-end cleaning. Shampoo carpets, upholstery, and drapes. Clean your car's interior. Dry-clean your winter coat. Then resolve to never let smoke in these places again.

Get rid of every ashtray, lighter, and cigarette.

Creating new routines also helps. Studies show that triggers—such as having coffee or finishing a meal—are especially tempting for women. So enjoy your morning coffee in a café or at the office, where you can't smoke. Finish a meal with gum or a sugar-free candy.

You'll still have cravings, but they last only a couple of minutes. Be prepared. Keep your purse stocked with sugar-free gum, a bottle of water, and something to keep your hands busy, like knitting or a deck of cards.

Reviewed by
Arefa Cassoobhoy, MD, MPH
WebMD Medical Editor



Read **Routine Health Maintenance for Men**, an article at WebMD.com.

[LEARN HOW ON PAGE 4](#)

LIVING
HEALTHY

MEN'S HEALTH

Doctor Who?

IT'S PROBABLY TIME TO MAKE THAT APPOINTMENT. HERE'S WHY

By Sonya Collins

If you're like a lot of guys, you probably haven't had a physical in a while. Men are 24% less likely than women to have seen a doctor in the past year. Yet men are more likely to check into the hospital for congestive heart failure, diabetes-related problems, and pneumonia—all issues that you might prevent with routine primary care.

Now, you don't have to go every year, but if it's been more than two years since you've seen your primary care doc, it's probably time to make that appointment.

What happens at a physical and how often you need one depend on your health and your age. The physical itself is a head-to-toe exam, and men over 50 can expect a rectal exam to check for prostate problems, intestinal bleeding, and early signs of prostate and colorectal cancers.

A typical visit also includes a blood pressure check, which you should have at least every two years, and giving blood samples. Doctors use blood tests to check for



diabetes and cholesterol level. Adults older than age 20 who don't have risk factors for heart disease should have their cholesterol checked every four to six years. Adults who are overweight or have high blood pressure should get a diabetes screening.

Chronic diseases and cancers may not show any symptoms at first, but you stand the best chance of curing or managing them when your doctor

catches them early. "Somebody may have severe diabetes and not have any symptoms, so certainly there's opportunity to turn some of those things around if they're detected early," says Clark T. Eddy, DO, of ProPartnersMD, a medical group in the Kansas City area that specializes in men's health.

During your checkup, you'll answer questions that can help your doctor

VITAL STATS

HERE'S A LIST OF WHAT TO TELL YOUR DOCTOR.

- Names and doses of your medications, including vitamins, supplements, and over-the-counter
- All the vaccines you've had in the past 10 years
- When you had your last cancer screenings
- Your family's history of cancer and other diseases
- The truth about your diet; exercise; use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs
- Any aches, pains, problems, or questions you have

see signs of depression or habits that might be a risk to your health. Depending on your lifestyle and personal and family history, your doctor might suggest additional tests. The doctor will also recommend the appropriate vaccines for your age and lifestyle.

"Even if you haven't been to a doctor in 20 years," Eddy says, "coming in for a physical is the first step to being a more active participant in your health."

Reviewed by
Michael W. Smith, MD
WebMD Chief Medical Editor



Routine Advice

Does this sound like you? You've been a loyal user of the same cleanser and face moisturizer for *years*. But lately you notice your skin is drier. Should you keep using your old faves or switch things up? "Out with the old, in with the new," says Mary Lupo, MD, dermatologist and clinical professor of dermatology at Tulane University School of Medicine. "It's probably time to shake things up with your beauty routine." Think of it like this, Lupo says: As your vision changes with age, so does the strength of your contact lens or eyeglass prescription. Because your skin produces less natural oil as you get older, your skin needs also morph. Plus, you might notice changes when you switch climates or start a new medication. "If you don't address these changes with effective products, your skin can start to look lackluster and dull." Her advice? Try a cleanser and moisturizer designed for dry skin. How do you know what will work to hydrate your complexion? "Look for products infused with moisture-attracting ingredients like hyaluronic acid, glycerin, shea butter, ceramides, and dimethicone," she advises. "Skip oil-stripping astringents and toners, which are suited for oily and combination complexions. For an even bigger boost, apply a rich cream to your face at night after cleansing. You'll wake up with a smoother, baby-soft complexion."

Shop now for
these products!LEARN HOW
ON PAGE 4

YOU ASKED

Eye Know

A TOP DERM REVEALS THE PRODUCTS THAT PROTECT
AGAINST PUFFINESS, CROW'S FEET, AND MORE

By Ayren Jackson-Cannady

**1 Once Removed**
Avène Gentle Eye Makeup Remover (\$18)

"Since eyelid skin is so thin, airborne allergens that do not affect the rest of the face may bother the eyelids. When eyelids are sensitive or sting-y to the touch, avoid using facial washes or creams with potential irritants such as retinol, glycolic, or salicylic acid. If you wear eye makeup, use a gentle, noncomedogenic makeup remover like this, and avoid scrubbing."

ingredient in this eye cream, work wonders to smooth and firm delicate eyelid skin."

4 Shrink Rap
100% Pure Organic Coffee Bean Caffeine Eye Cream (\$21)

"Puffiness under the eyes can be caused by several issues, including fatigue, fluid retention, seasonal allergies, excess salt intake, and genetics. I recommend an eye cream that contains caffeine that will help tighten the skin, reducing the puffiness, and also help stimulate lymphatic drainage of fluid away from the under-eye area."

2 Moist Wanted
CeraVe Eye Repair Cream (\$13.99)

"Eyelid skin is thin and delicate and can become dry and flaky in cold weather, when skin is exposed to wind, dry climates, and indoor heating that zaps moisture from the air. Look for an eye cream infused with hyaluronic acid, jojoba, argan oil, almond oil, shea butter, and/or glycerin—powerhouse ingredients that trap and hold water on the skin while creating a protective barrier to keep water from evaporating."

5 Block and Tackle
Clinique Superdefense Age Defense Eye Cream Broad Spectrum (\$39.50)

"The skin around the eyelids is the thinnest on the body, and therefore more delicate and subject to daily damage from UV exposure. I recommend starting with a light, SPF-infused eye cream like this one early—in your 20s—to delay the visible signs of aging."

3 Out of Line
Neutrogena Rapid Wrinkle Repair Eye Cream (\$20.99)

"Crow's feet, those fine lines around the eyes, are a result of cumulative sun damage, muscle contraction—think squinting, laughing, smiling—and skin thinning that comes with age. Eye creams with antioxidants such as vitamin E, C, idebenone, coffee berry extract, grapeseed extract, plus peptides or retinol, the active

6 Dark Secret
Olay Total Effects Eye Brightening CC Cream (\$22.99)

"There are many reasons for under-eye circles, including chronic rubbing or a genetic predisposition. Look for eye treatments with skin-brightening ingredients like retinol, vitamin C, kojic acid, or licorice extract, which can be helpful for skin discoloration. This one contains niacinamide, a potent ingredient that improves elasticity and erases discolorations."



Rebecca Kazin, MD
Washington Institute of Dermatologic Laser Surgery
and CEO at RKMD Cosmeceuticals

THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS SECTION ARE OF THE EXPERTS AND ARE NOT THE OPINIONS OF WEBMD. WEBMD DOES NOT ENDORSE ANY SPECIFIC PRODUCT, SERVICE, OR TREATMENT.

Reviewed by Karyn Grossman, MD
WebMD Skin Care Expert

BEAUTY SMARTS

It's a Wash

WHAT'S IN A SHAMPOO? WE BREAK IT DOWN AND HELP YOU FIND THE RIGHT ONE FOR YOUR HAIR TYPE

By Liesa Goins

● Staring at an aisle of shampoo bottles is enough to get anyone into a lather. But the words on the labels are backed up by science. And, bottom line, “most shampoos are basically cleansing agents, thickeners, preservatives, and humectants,” says Ni’Kita Wilson, CEO of Catalyst Cosmetic Development in Union, N.J.

But you need the right combination to make a formula that’s precisely right for your hair. We asked shampoo chemists for a guide to the best options depending on your hair type.

Normal

Some people have the Goldilocks of locks—a just-right balance of oiliness and dryness that isn’t too fine or frizzy. If that’s you, you need a fairly even ratio of conditioning agents and detergents, Wilson says. You may have to hunt a bit. “You won’t find a lot of ‘normal’ shampoos these days because brands create versions for specific hair types,” adds Perry Romanowski, an independent cosmetic chemist in Chicago.

Oily

An excess of sebum or heavy, waxy styling products can leave a greasy

residue that requires a clarifying formula to remove. “These tend to have salicylic acid to break down gunk left on the hair and scalp,” Wilson says. The ingredients list should be shorter (because you don’t want to deposit anything else on your hair), and you want detergents like sulfates to effectively remove dirt and oils.

Fine

The key to fattening up skinny strands is to look for polymers like the “quats” (polyquaternium 7 or 10), which can make hair look and feel thicker, Romanowski says. Wilson suggests fine hair will feel bulkier with shampoos that have film-formers such as hydrolyzed wheat protein and PG-propyl silanetriol, which increase the diameter of the hair shaft. “You also want to avoid silicones, which can feel heavy on fine textures,” Romanowski adds.

Frizzy or curly

To tame an unruly mane, you need high levels of conditioning agents for smoothness and moisture. In this case, new products called cleansing conditioners offer that blend of benefits. “A cleansing conditioner is basically a

APP EXTRA!
What’s all the sulfate-free hype about? Get the scoop.

conditioner with a little bit of mild surfactants to help lift dirt,” Wilson says. These offer high levels of moisture and gently cleanse to keep the hair cuticle smooth and fight flyaways.

Dry, damaged, or chemically treated

Whether your scalp naturally produces less sebum or you have dehydrated strands caused by heat damage or a chemical process, you need a moisturizing formula.

The most effective options deposit ingredients to make brittle hair

feel more supple. Ingredients like dimethicone and cyclomethicone provide the softness and shine that make hair look healthier, Romanowski says.

Higher levels of conditioning agents like a polyquaternium, guar hydroxypropyltrimonium chloride, or hydroxyethyl dimonium chloride seal down the cuticle to provide smoothness and manageability, Wilson explains.

Reviewed by
Mohiba K. Tareen, MD
WebMD Beauty Expert

YOUR SMILE

Food Fighters

GOOD GUMS START WITH YOUR DIET. ADD THESE EATS TO YOUR DAILY ROUTINE TO COMBAT PERIODONTAL DISEASE

By Colleen Oakley

● You brush regularly and your teeth and gums feel great, so when it comes to gum disease you have nothing to worry about, right? Wrong. According to the CDC, periodontal disease affects half of U.S. adults ages 30 and older. It's known as the "silent" disease because often no symptoms signal a problem until it progresses to an advanced stage, threatening tooth decay and loss, says David Fields, DMD, a family dentist in Marietta, Ga.

But pain and tooth loss are sometimes the least of the consequences linked to gum disease. Harvard researchers found that men with periodontal disease have a 63% higher risk of developing pancreatic cancer.

Other studies show links between gum disease and diabetes and heart disease. "Periodontal disease is a disease of chronic inflammation," says Fields, so a link to other chronic inflammatory diseases, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease, seems to make sense.

While brushing, flossing, and rinsing daily as well as regular visits to your dentist can reduce the chances of gum disease, you can do a few other things to cut down on bacteria and inflammation in your gums. Consider adding more of these foods and beverages to your diet.



BRUSH UP

ASK YOUR DENTIST THESE QUESTIONS TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE DOING ALL YOU CAN TO PREVENT GUM DISEASE.

1. Do I floss correctly? Have your dentist demonstrate step-by-step the proper way to floss.

2. What floss should I use? One type might be better suited to your teeth than another.

3. Do I brush too hard? This can cause some gum recession and eventually bone loss, so ask your dentist or hygienist to show you proper brushing technique.

Also, check for red, swollen, or painful gums; bleeding when you brush, floss, or eat some foods; or gums that look like they have receded from your teeth. If you have any of these changes, mention them to your dentist.

Coffee. A recent study from Boston University found that regular coffee consumption was linked with a small but significant reduction in tooth bone loss, suggesting that coffee may offer a protective benefit against periodontal disease.

Nuts, fruits, and legumes. A study published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* found that diets high in fiber and antioxidants slowed the progression of periodontal disease in older adults.

Cranberries. The polyphenols in the tart red fruit slow the growth of bacteria that cause periodontal disease and may help reduce inflammation, according to a recent study in the *Journal of the Canadian Dental Association*.

Yogurt. A study published in the *Journal of Periodontology* found that people who regularly ate cheese, milk, and yogurt had a lower risk of gum disease.

"No one specific ingredient can solve all of your health problems," Fields says. "Our bodies are complex, so your diet needs to be complex. These foods, which may inhibit the specific bacteria known to be responsible for periodontal disease, should be a part of a balanced diet."

Reviewed by **Eric Yabu, DDS**
WebMD Oral Health Expert



PREGNANCY

Model Behavior

By Liz Krieger

She may be girl-next-door gorgeous, but Molly Sims, 41, will be the first person to tell you just how much time and effort goes into getting camera-ready. And in her new book out this January, *The Everyday Supermodel: My Beauty, Fashion, and Wellness Secrets Made Simple*, she does just that.

This Kentucky-born model, who has a 2-year-old son, Brooks, and another baby due this spring, bursts with clever makeup and fashion secrets as well as details about her honest and hardworking approach to health and wellness. A self-proclaimed girl's girl, Sims first rose to fame after appearing in many *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issues and later starred for five seasons on NBC's *Las Vegas*.

Sims reveals how she stays beautiful and balanced while bringing up babies.



Sims' new book, The Everyday Supermodel, is out in January.

Read the full Q&A with Sims in our free tablet apps!

What changed most after you became a parent?

I was just talking with a friend about this, someone who is single, without kids. I said not only does she have freedom, but she has freedom without guilt! I celebrated my anniversary with Scott [film producer Scott Stuber] and left Brooks to go to Boston. That was so hard. I missed him. But I try to remember how important time for me, and time for us, really is.

What's the one piece of advice you'd give to every new mom?

I'd say that no matter what, you have to take care of yourself. My mom taught me this: Get out of your sweats. Find something to wear that you feel great in. That may be yoga pants, and if so, that's great. But more than that, it's about having a life—and the more you maintain that, the better you will be as a wife, a mother, a person, and you will be the best you that you can be.

What kind of mom do you hope to be?

There are a hundred different ways to parent, but I think that my folks set a great example for me because they were first and foremost my parents, and definitely not my friends. Yes, my mom and I are best friends now, but as a teenager, I needed a mom.

How do you think Brooks will like having a new sibling?

I want to be very respectful about how we ease that transition for him, but I am excited for him. I have an older brother, and so I am happy for my son to have someone else in his life besides Scott and me.

What's different in your 40s compared with your 30s?

For one thing, I dress completely different at 40 than I did at 35—and not in a bad way. You can still be trendy, but maybe not wearing trends from head to toe. Also: Your chest, your butt, your legs—all three can't be hanging out.

Reviewed by **Hansa Bhargava, MD**
WebMD Medical Editor



PREGNANCY

Good Defense

IF YOU'RE PREGNANT (OR TRYING), YOUR VACCINATIONS NEED TO BE UP-TO-DATE. ARE YOU COVERED?

By Stephanie Watson

● If you're unlucky enough to come down with the flu, you'll probably feel miserable for a few days. But if you happen to be pregnant, you could get really sick—sick enough to wind up in the hospital. You might even go into labor prematurely, or give birth to a smaller-than-normal baby.

By arming yourself against germs before you conceive, you also protect your baby against future exposures. "Mothers' [bodies] make antibodies when they get an immunization, and then the placenta has a system for pumping those antibodies to the fetus. So the baby will be born with the same or more of the antibodies that the mother has," explains Kevin A. Ault, MD, a professor at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

Here's a guide to the vaccines moms-to-be need, and when they should get them:

Before You Start Trying

If possible, you should be up-to-date on all recommended adult



vaccines, especially measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), and varicella (chicken pox). These infections can cause birth defects and miscarriage, and doctors don't advise getting the vaccines for them during pregnancy.

Once You Are Pregnant

Two shots you definitely

should get during pregnancy are the diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP) and flu vaccines. By vaccinating yourself, you also indirectly protect your baby once he's born, because newborns must wait a few months before they get their own shots against these diseases.

If you're worried about safety, the research should reassure you. In 50 years' worth of studies on the flu vaccine in pregnancy, none has found a risk to mothers or babies. The newer DTaP vaccine doesn't have as much research behind it, but the studies that have been done don't suggest any risk, Ault

says. And because of the recent rise in cases of pertussis (whooping cough), which can be deadly to infants, it's important to get vaccinated to protect your baby.

Once You Deliver

Right after baby arrives, it's time to catch up on any vaccinations you didn't already get. That includes DTaP, MMR, and varicella. These vaccines are safe even while you're nursing, and they'll protect both you and your new baby.

Reviewed by **Nivin C.S. Todd, MD**
WebMD Pregnancy Expert

ASK YOUR DOCTOR

1. Which vaccines do I need to have before I get pregnant?
2. Which vaccines should I get while I'm pregnant?
3. When is the best time during my pregnancy to get vaccinated?
4. Could any vaccines harm my baby?
5. What should I do if I have side effects from a vaccine?
6. Once my baby is born, which vaccines will I need?



Watch **Baby Vaccine Reactions**, a video at WebMD.com.

[LEARN HOW ON PAGE 4](#)

FAMILY & PARENTING

BABY TALK

Shot Clock

YOUR BABY'S FIRST YEAR IS FULL OF VACCINES.
DO YOU KNOW WHICH ONES SHE NEEDS AND WHEN?

By Gina Shaw

● One new-baby milestone that no new parent looks forward to: baby's first shots. But the series of vaccinations your newborn receives during his first year of life is essential to keeping him healthy.

"Because of my gray hair, I've seen all of these diseases that our vaccines prevent," says William Schaffner, MD, chair of the department of preventive medicine at Vanderbilt University. "If you haven't seen them, you don't recognize how commonplace they used to be."

Hepatitis B is a contagious liver disease spread by blood and sexual contact; a mother who doesn't know she's infected can also spread it to her baby. Hep B is a three-vaccine series: The first shot is given at birth, the second between 1 month and 2 months of age, and the third between 6 and 18 months. (The ranges for this and other vaccines are designed to allow doctors and parents some leeway in scheduling well-baby visits.)

Rotavirus is a common gastrointestinal disease that spreads easily among young children, causing diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and stomach pain. Severe rotavirus can cause dehydration and even death. Your baby will be vaccinated for rotavirus at 2 months, 4 months, and 6 months.

Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis were once major killers of children. The contagious respiratory illness diphtheria killed thousands of children every year in the early part of the 20th century. Tetanus, also known as lockjaw, spreads when bacteria enter the skin through a cut or scrape, and can cause paralyzing muscle spasms. Pertussis, also known as whooping cough, is highly contagious



TAKE FIVE

VACCINE EXPERT WILLIAM SCHAFFNER, MD, RECOMMENDS YOU ASK YOUR PEDIATRICIAN OR FAMILY DOCTOR THESE QUESTIONS AS YOUR BABY IS ABOUT TO RECEIVE HIS FIRST VACCINATIONS.

1. When do you give each of the vaccines? (Since some vaccines can be given over a range of ages, doctors may have slightly different schedules.)
2. What sorts of reactions can I expect?
3. When should I call you, and what can we handle at home if the baby has a reaction?
4. Tell me about the diseases being prevented.
5. Why is it so important for family members to get the pertussis vaccine?

and causes uncontrollable, violent coughing. Before the vaccine, it was responsible for about 8,000 deaths in the United States every year. Your baby will get the combined DTaP vaccine at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, between 15 and 18 months, and again between ages 4 and 6. Doctors also recommend that adults who will be around newborn babies get their booster shots.

Haemophilus influenzae type b is a bacterium that can infect the lining of the brain, causing meningitis. It can also cause pneumonia and inflammation of the epiglottis, which could affect a baby's ability to breathe. The milder symptoms of meningitis include fever, stiff neck, and drowsiness, but it can progress to coma and even death, and even children who recover from severe meningitis may have lingering brain damage

and other symptoms. Your baby will receive the Hib vaccine at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, and between 12 and 15 months.

Pneumococcus can cause pneumonia, meningitis, and other serious infections in children. Your child will get this vaccine at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, and between 12 and 15 months.

Polio once infected thousands of people every year, mostly children

Doctors also recommend that adults who will be around newborns get their booster shots.

and young adults, causing spinal cord inflammation and sometimes paralyzing the throat, chest, arms, or legs. The polio vaccine is given at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, and between 12 and 15 months.

Measles, mumps, and rubella are viral infections that were once very common in the United States. Measles can cause pneumonia and encephalitis, a potentially deadly brain infection, while mumps sometimes leaves children deaf. When it infected pregnant women, rubella caused permanent damage to their babies 85% of the time. The combined MMR vaccine is

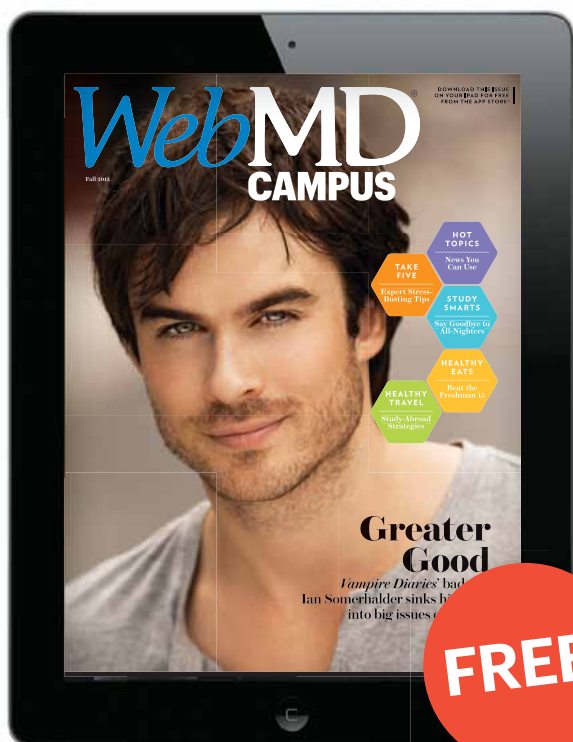
given as a series of two doses at 12 to 15 months of age, and at 4 to 6 years of age.

Varicella, or chicken pox, may not sound that threatening, but this highly contagious infection, with its

red bumps and blisters, can lead to serious complications like pneumonia and encephalitis. The varicella vaccine is given at 12 and 15 months of age and again between ages 4 and 6.

Influenza can be dangerous in young children. Sometimes the flu can weaken a child's immune system, allowing him to contract a bacterial infection. And young children are at higher risk of flu complications, such as pneumonia, bronchitis, sinusitis, and earache. Your baby should receive the flu vaccine annually starting at 6 months. Children younger than 2 will get the shot; after age 2 they can get the nasal spray vaccine.

Reviewed by **Hansa Bhargava, MD**
WebMD Medical Editor



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College Student?
Do You
Know One?

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Take **Discipline Do's and Don'ts**, a top quiz on the Parenting center at WebMD.com.

[LEARN HOW ON PAGE 4](#)

KIDS' HEALTH

Behind the Scenes

IS YOUR KID A JERK? FIND OUT WHY YOUR CHILD ACTS OUT AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

By Lisa O'Neill Hill

● Your kid is great—he's a good sport, does lots of good deeds—but he has obnoxious moments. And those moments threaten your sanity. Sometimes he doesn't listen to you. He won't take no for an answer. He's mean to his sister. You start to ask yourself, "Is my kid a jerk?"

"All of those behaviors are typically one of two things: A cry for help or attention," says Christine Carter, PhD, author of *Raising Happiness: 10 Simple Steps for More Joyful Kids and Happier Parents*. "I see these things as flags, maybe not red flags, but certainly yellow or orange."

Here are some common problems and tips for dealing with them.

They dish out sassy or back talk, yell, or have angry outbursts. That's because they're feeling disappointment, anger, or frustration. Point out the difference between what your child feels and how she acts. Feelings are always OK. Tell your child you understand her feelings, but help her take the heat out of the moment.

"The most appropriate response [when you feel] angry is to do something to calm yourself down so you can be effective," Carter says. Suggest your kid take 10 deep breaths or write a



letter that she never sends. After a few minutes, she can come back and try again to talk calmly.

They disobey or ignore you. She's probably just testing her limits. "Sometimes parents don't adjust their expectations, so they may still treat the kid like she is 8 or 9" when she's older, says Kristin Kenefick, PsyD, associate professor of clinical psychology at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. Kids, especially teenagers, need a bit of freedom.

Let them make choices that are age-appropriate. "Structure is part of their

lives, and they're just trying to carve out a place for themselves," Carter says. But they also need limits.

They beg or won't take no for an answer. Why? He's upset you didn't say yes.

Negotiation between parents and kids is normal. But it's different from whining and begging. If you say "no" to your kid's request, he should learn how to deal with his disappointment. Carter suggests that parents be firm when something isn't open to discussion. Tell your child not to ask again. "You have the ability to say 'no' and not negotiate," Carter says.

RED FLAGS

IS YOUR CHILD ACTING OUT? FIND OUT WHEN YOU SHOULD GET HELP WITH THESE TIPS.

"To some extent, we do expect at least some of these behaviors" in all kids, says Kristin Kenefick, PsyD. You want to ask yourself if the behaviors interfere with your child's functioning. If he gets in trouble, makes bad grades, has trouble with friends, or acts out at home, get help.

"I think you want to seek outside help if you are not able to make any progress on your own," parenting expert Christine Carter, PhD, says. "We're trying to prevent [a child's] behaviors from becoming habits." Talk to a therapist, parent coach, or school counselor.

Even if your kid isn't a jerk—and he probably isn't—he may still have a problem. Keep an eye out if he seems sad or quiet or has trouble sleeping. "It's easier to pay attention to the kid who is acting out. Parents do sometimes overlook the kids who are quiet," Kenefick says. "They could be in as much distress."

Reviewed by **Roy Benaroch, MD**
WebMD Kids' Health Expert

PET HEALTH

Alternate Route

MASSAGE, ACUPUNCTURE, HERBS—PETS CAN BENEFIT FROM THESE THERAPIES, TOO

By Lisa Fields



● More veterinarians than ever practice holistic medicine today. They look at a pet's overall health and use traditional and alternative therapies. They rely on lab tests and prescription drugs, but also acupuncture, massage, and herbal remedies. They encourage changes in pets' diets and lifestyles to help ward off illnesses like obesity, arthritis, diabetes, and cancer.

"As a doctor, I want any tool that's going to work. Having more tools in my tool kit has made a huge difference," says Barbara Royal, DVM, president of the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association. Here are some alternative treatments available for your dog or cat.

Acupuncture

A certified acupuncturist inserts thin needles in specific points of your pet's body to relieve pain and pressure. Pets with back pain, arthritis, muscle spasms, a limp, or other problems may benefit from this treatment.

"Although acupuncture has been around for 5,000 years, only in the past 10 to 20 years has the scientific community been able to see why this works," says Claude D. Grosjean, a small-animal veterinarian who practices holistic medicine in Southampton, N.Y. "There's very good research, a lot of it done in China."

Chiropractic treatments

Chiropractors move the bones in the spine and other parts of the body to relieve pain. Pets with neck or back problems can benefit from these treatments, just like people do. But for pets, you won't hear cracking, since less aggressive force is used. "It's a gentle procedure, and it can make a great difference on the alignment of the spine," Royal says.

Massage

Massage can improve blood flow, reduce swelling, and help with your pet's anxiety issues. "Pets like it," says Grosjean, who

FROM WEBMD.COM

Q&A

"My cat is pretty hefty, and I've heard diabetes is common in cats. How do I know if he might have it, and how would I care for him?"



Carrie O'Neill
39, assistant community liaison officer, American Embassy, Hanoi, Vietnam



EXPERT'S ANSWER

"Diabetes is somewhat common in cats, especially older, overweight cats. Classic signs are increased drinking, urination, and appetite. Some owners report that when they change the litter, their cat's urine seems 'sticky'—a result of high levels of sugar in the urine.

Cats may also have dry, flaky skin, particularly on their lower back near their tail. It's easy for your veterinarian to check for high levels of glucose (a sugar) in the urine and blood.

If diabetes is the diagnosis, daily treatment—similar to that for humans—can include tablets, insulin injections, or a low-fat diet."



Will Draper, DVM
The Village Vets, Decatur, Ga.



Check out **25 Most Popular Dog Breeds and Their Health Problems**, a top slideshow at WebMD.com.

[LEARN HOW ON PAGE 4](#)

A better diet can improve your pet's overall health, reduce inflammation, and ease symptoms of chronic diseases.

practices tui na, a traditional Chinese form of massage.

"It's a powerful therapy tool," Royal says, "but you need someone trained in animal massage—that's what makes the difference."

Aromatherapy

The pleasant scents of natural oils can help pets relieve stress. "Scent is so important in an animal's life," Royal says. "It can change the way the brain functions."

Pets have a more sensitive sense of smell, so ask your veterinarian for advice before trying aromatherapy.

"Pets can smell more than 20 times better than we can," Royal says. "You don't need the whole room to smell like lavender to calm them down. You don't want to overwhelm them."

Nutrition

A better diet can improve your pet's overall health, reduce inflammation, and ease symptoms of chronic diseases such as arthritis.

Dogs and cats are carnivores. The higher the protein percentage they take in, the better. Carbohydrate-rich kibble food usually isn't best for their diets. Royal recommends avoiding pet

food containing corn, wheat, soy, or peanut butter. "Once you eliminate those, you're in a better tier of nutrition," she says. Talk to your vet before making a food change, though.

Herbs

Herbs can help calm pets. Some holistic vets prescribe the herbs chamomile, kava, or valerian to soothe animals. They may recommend combinations of five to 20 herbs that are made specifically for your pet.

"It's not a good idea to just go on the Internet, find an herbal formula, and give it to your pet," Grosjean says. "If you choose the wrong formula, you're going to make the situation a lot worse."

Reviewed by **Amy Flowers, DVM**
WebMD Pet Health Expert



*Whether she's
Veronica Mars,
the Gossip Girl
narrator, or Anna
from Frozen to
you, you know
Kristen Bell.
What you might
not know is that
the actor and mom
of two young kids
walks the walk
when it comes
to balance and
healthy living*

BY GINA SHAW
Photography by Robert Ascroft/CPI

KRISTEN BELL just killed her vegetable garden.

It's not what you think.

Showtime's *House of Lies* star and her husband, actor Dax Shepard, haven't suddenly decided to convert from their healthy vegetarian lifestyle to well-done steaks and French fries.

In fact, the demise of Bell's beloved veggie patch is just one more sign that she and Shepard walk the walk when it comes to both healthy living and the environment. "It's been 95 in L.A. for two weeks, and we're currently getting AstroTurf in our front yard, trying to make a responsible decision and be more water-conscious," she explains. "But over the course of putting in the turf, we accidentally turned off the sprinklers to the garden, too, and it just got torched."

After the turf is in, though, Bell is excited to replant her garden with "anything that'll grow." Her go-to vegetables include green beans, kale, and a bumper crop of tomatoes.

Bell and Shepard went vegan for about a year and a half, but they switched back to regular vegetarianism when Bell got pregnant with daughter Lincoln, who'll be 2 in March and who's inherited her parents' love for the fresh and homemade. "She has a very adventurous palate," Bell says. "She loves olive tapenade! I don't really limit her diet—well, I limit it to healthy things, no sugar and not a lot of processed foods, but she doesn't eat just vegetarian. She'll have chicken and fish."

KID STUFF

Lincoln will soon have to share her olive tapenade with a little sibling—Bell and Shepard welcomed their second child in December.

"That pregnancy felt exactly the same," she says as Lincoln

plays on her lap. ("We're transitioning down to one nap, and she's doing so good staying up until noon!" Bell coos to her daughter.) "I know a lot of women say that their pregnancies are very, very different, but I've experienced identical symptoms—or the lack of them." She's lucked out twice: With the exception of some morning sickness during her first trimester, Bell's only pregnancy "symptom" was "my ever-changing waistline!"

The adventurous, active Bell, who shot to fame with her role as a teen detective in the cult favorite TV series *Veronica Mars*—a show so popular that Bell and producer Rob Thomas were able to crowdfund a 2014 movie sequel on Kickstarter—says she didn't change her exercise routine much during this pregnancy. "I rode my bike a lot, which keeps a lot of pressure off having to worry about a workout," she says. "I started really getting into bike riding about two years ago, and I challenge anyone to ride their bike somewhere and not enjoy it. When I did *Hair* at the Hollywood Bowl this summer, I rode my bike to rehearsal every day."

As health-conscious about their daughter's screen time as they are about her diet, Bell and Shepard haven't yet allowed Lincoln to see her mom's star turn as Princess Anna in *Frozen*. (The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no video time for kids under 2.) She'll see it eventually, of course—and maybe she'll also be able to watch her mom on Broadway. Rumors of a *Frozen* stage version have been confirmed by producers, and Bell says she'd be thrilled to do it. "I think we all would, the whole cast," she says.

Just what is it about *Frozen* that made it the Disney princess movie that smashed all Disney princess movie records? "I have no ideal!" Bell admits. "There's no way to explain why something is a box office success. But I think it was emotionally resonant for people because there were so many themes that were born out of reality. It wasn't a girl finding a prince—that's a fantasy story—or a girl inheriting a kingdom, which is also a fantasy story. The plot lines to *Frozen* are sibling rivalry, being afraid of what makes you different, meeting someone and deciding to marry them way too soon before getting to know them—they're all themes in real human life. And the ultimate lesson is that you will always reap good rewards from selflessness."



WHEN YOUR CHILD GOES VEGGIE

Actor Kristen Bell made the decision to adopt a vegetarian lifestyle at age 11. What if your child comes to you and says, "Hey, I'm going vegetarian"? It's entirely possible—a 2014 nationwide survey by the Vegetarian Resource Group found that 4% of American youth between ages 8 and 18 are either vegetarian or vegan.

A vegetarian diet can be perfectly healthy for a growing child. But "you want to help your child avoid becoming a 'french-fry vegetarian,'" says Katie Kavanagh, PhD, an associate professor of public health nutrition at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Her advice:

EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE PROTEIN SOURCES.

"If they don't want to eat meat, talk with them about other sources of protein, like beans, tofu, or cheeses and eggs if they're not going vegan," Kavanagh says.

MAKE SURE VEGANS GET ENOUGH CALCIUM.

"Try multiple soy milks and rice milks," Kavanagh says. "They're all very different, so don't give up if you think the first one isn't great. And make sure the cereals and orange juices you buy are calcium-fortified."

PUMP UP THE IRON.

Iron is also important for growing bodies and present in darkly colored foods (like meats). Other surprising ways to get iron: "Make pasta sauce in an iron skillet; the acid unlocks the iron and it absorbs into the sauce," Kavanagh says. "Spinach also has a lot of iron, but it's hard to absorb. If you have oranges in your spinach salad, again, the acid unlocks it."



Watch **Veggies for Picky Eaters**, a video at WebMD.com.

[LEARN HOW ON PAGE 4](#)

Bell, a Neutrogena Naturals brand ambassador, expects to keep her second child out of the Hollywood limelight just as she's done with Lincoln, who's been no Suri Cruise or Zahara Jolie-Pitt—Google “Kristen Bell daughter” and you'll be able to count on one hand the number of photographs of the little girl you find (mostly showing her nestled securely in a wrap against Bell's chest).

And if you've flipped through *People* or *Us Weekly* or most other celebrity magazines lately, you may have noticed you're not seeing all those “paparazzi stalker” shots of celebrity kids leaving doctor's appointments or going to school. Bell and Shepard (along with other vocal celebrity parents like Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner) can take at least partial credit for that. Their “No Kids Policy” got a bunch of stars—like Jennifer Aniston and Jennifer Lawrence—to agree to turn down interviews with magazines and TV shows that use paparazzi shots of kids.

It sounds like a rarefied problem to have, but for Bell, it was all about her daughter's safety. “I know of hundreds of great causes in the world off the top of my head, but if something was going to affect my daughter, I

BELL ÉPOQUE

Kristen Bell practically radiates good health. How does she do it? Here are some of the health choices she credits with giving her that magic glow.

AVOID SUGAR. “I love dessert. I tried no sugar—I still ate fruit—for 30 days as a test, and I have never felt better,” she says. “It's very hard with pregnancy cravings, so I occasionally gave in and had something sweet and I always felt awful. I'm jittery, my skin itches, and I cannot get a good night's sleep.”

TOTE HEALTHY SNACKS. “I almost always have an apple in my purse. It's good for you, and the baby can gnaw on it! I also really love This Bar Saves Lives in all three flavors.”

MAKE IT FRESH. Bell and her husband, Dax Shepard, make good use of the tomatoes from their garden. “Dax makes a really good pasta carbonara—only without the ham. He cracks an egg and whips it up with olive oil, sea salt, garlic and a bunch of cherry tomatoes. And we make a lot of our own bruschetta.”

EVERYTHING IN MODERATION. “I had pizza last night! My husband had a party with his buddies and it was delicious. I think you should strive to do good for your body, but I don't think that you should feel deprived or like you're sacrificing or living in pain.”



“If something was going to affect my daughter, I needed to take action.”

needed to take action,” she says. “I made the choice to have this career, but nobody asked her. Part of my skill set is rallying people, so I thought, why don't I just talk about this? And at the same time there was this wonderful blossoming of mommy bloggers out there, women who had writing talent and covered passionate parenting issues, and their attention really helped make this happen.”

CAUSE CELEB

As far as the “hundreds of great causes” out there, Bell's got skin in the game for more than a few, including animal charities and the American Red Cross. She even auctioned off a date last year to raise money for Invisible Children, which works to bring abducted “child soldiers” in central Africa home to their families.

But she's really put her star power behind This Bar Saves Lives, a line of gluten-free, non-GMO (genetically modified organism) snack bars found at Whole Foods and other natural food stores, as well as online. For every bar purchased, the company donates a peanut-and-milk-powder supplement package called Plumpy'Nut to the global food charity Save the

GREG DEGUIRE/GETTY IMAGES

Children. The “buy one, give one” approach follows the TOMS model—only with food instead of shoes.

“It was the brainchild of a couple of friends of mine [including Ryan Devlin, her former co-star on *Veronica Mars*], who, rightfully so, saw a hole in the market,” says Bell, who serves on the company's board and is its brand ambassador. “Plumpy'Nut treats acute malnutrition and can take a baby from skeletal to plump and beautiful in a couple of months.” She's not exaggerating. Go to thisbarsaveslives.com, click on “our cause,” and watch the ABC “before and after” video. Bring Kleenex.

In just over a year, This Bar Saves Lives has donated more than 315,000 packets of Plumpy'Nut and its companion product, NutriButter, designed to prevent stunting in undernourished kids under age 2. “The conscious consumer is the way of the future,” Bell says. “People are looking at where their food and other products come from, the ethics of the company. If you give people the choice to have a bar that's delicious, or one that's delicious and also feeds a child, they'll feed a child every time. It really makes you feel good.”

According to Save the Children, which This Bar Saves Lives works with to distribute Plumpy'Nut, about one in four children younger than age 5 worldwide suffers from chronic malnutrition. The country with the worst food crisis right now is South Sudan, says Save the Children's president and CEO, Carolyn Miles. Other hunger hot zones include the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya), the Central African Republic, coastal West Africa (particularly with the Ebola crisis), and Central America, where the coffee rust disease and the El Niño weather pattern deplete crops.

“Healthy foods fuel the growth of a child's brain and body in their early years. Without them, children suffer lifelong consequences: Their growth is stunted, they are more susceptible to illness, they struggle to keep up and pay attention in school,” Miles says. “When we reach children early on with the right nutritious foods, we can change their future.”

DOWN TIME

Between film and TV roles, social activism and parenting, Bell still finds time to be a fan as well as a star. She and Shepard binge-watch new TV shows—the latest is *Fargo*—and she's passionately addicted to HBO's *Game of Thrones*. “I am so, so, so into it and I get so excited. The next season doesn't start until 2015, so I'm here just changing diapers and trying not to think about what's going on in *Castle Black*,” she says. “I think it's the best cinematography ever captured, and the visual scope is just brilliant.”

Although the former high school ski team competitor has given up downhill skiing after having a child, she has no plans to abandon the other adrenaline-fueled adventures she loves, like trekking with gorillas in Rwanda.

“We hiked to the Virunga forest where all the silverbacks live,” she remembers breathlessly. “One of the mothers had 6-month-old twin babies, and it was mesmerizing to watch them and how much like us they are. They look at us, confused and interested, and we look back at them with the same emotions.”

Reviewed by **Hansa Bhargava, MD**
WebMD Medical Editor



MIND GAMES

Can you train your brain? A whole industry says yes. But are the claims true? We take a look at the evidence behind the games, apps, and programs to see if it measures up.

BY BRENDA GOODMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TED MORRISON

Want to be smarter, think faster, boost your memory, and improve your focus? A billion-dollar brain-training industry is ready to help.

Seniors striving to stay mentally sharp, parents looking for drug-free ways to help kids with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and other learning disabilities, athletes seeking a competitive edge, patients recovering from brain injuries, executives hoping to make better decisions under pressure, and patients struggling with pain—some now turn to apps, games, and programs that promise to increase the brain's fitness.

But do they work? While a handful of early experiments hint that brain training might offer some benefits, experts caution the claims have so far outstripped what science has been able to

prove. Also, the fast-growing industry has operated largely unnoticed by federal regulators. Consumers can end up spending substantial amounts of money on these programs, part of an industry growing exponentially every year. What do they get in return?

"I look at it, to some degree, like the supplement industry, where people are scrambling to take this, that, and the other supplement, and there's not a lot of data showing that these supplements have that much of a positive impact," says Peter Finn, PhD, a clinical psychologist and expert in substance abuse at Indiana University Bloomington. He was just awarded a \$2.3 million grant from NIH to study whether brain training to increase working memory might help alcoholics and other substance abusers.



Many brain researchers agree. In October, an international group of 69 neuroscientists and psychologists penned an open letter to caution consumers that claims made by brain-game companies aren't scientifically proven.

Even so, many serious scientists—including at least one who signed that letter—are reluctant to completely dismiss brain training, which they believe has promise, if not definitive proof. In the meantime, public and private sources are providing millions of dollars in research money to find that proof. In the past fiscal year alone, the government funded at least \$5 million in brain-training studies. That doesn't include many more millions spent by private companies hoping to sell brain-training programs to consumers.

"I'm a little afraid that if the message is too strong—that this is all a bunch of made-up stuff—then we have the risk of throwing the baby out with the bathwater," says Adam Gazzaley, MD, PhD, a professor of neurology and brain-game developer at the University of California, San Francisco.

CLAIM GAME

Barely a decade old, the industry that promotes exercising your brain like a muscle is one of the fastest-growing segments of the technology market, observers say. With growth in the range of 20% to 25% each year, brain training has blossomed from a \$210 million business in 2005 to one worth \$1.3 billion in 2013, according to SharpBrains, an industry trade group.

Market leader Lumosity, which charges \$15 per month or \$80 per year for access to its brain games, has doubled its revenue every year since 2007. The company recently said it had reached 45 million members around the world.

The explosive growth has been driven by consumers who download "edutainment" apps and programs to their computers, tablets, and smartphones. These people include athletes, fighter pilots, soldiers recovering from head injuries, burn victims, and children with learning disorders.

Nearly half of those who try brain training are adults age 50 and older,

who, like Ann Stewart, a retired real estate executive in Berkeley, Calif., hope to keep their mental abilities sharp.

"I always thought my brain was one of my more trustworthy assets," says Stewart, 66. But then names became harder to recall, and she started doing absentminded things that shook her sense of self-reliance, like putting a carton of eggs in the freezer instead of the refrigerator. So she signed up for

a study of a new brain-training game. After that ended, she continued to play other brain games. She estimates she spent \$200. She has since switched to a free games app, even though she can't point to any noticeable benefits.

"I wanted to keep doing something, and an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure in my brain," she says.

But about half of people who've tried serious brain-training games aren't sure

BRAIN
 TRAINING HAS
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they got what they bargained for, according to a SharpBrains survey.

About 10% of people, including Cindy Siegal, say they feel cheated by the claims made by brain-training companies. Siegal, who lives in Montclair, N.J., spent \$10,000 on a brain-training program called LearningRx to help her teenage daughter Brianna, who has memory problems and dyslexia.

After almost a year, Brianna was still failing her classes, her teachers hadn't noticed improvement, and she felt more frustrated and discouraged than ever.

Tanya Mitchell, vice president of research and development for LearningRx, contends that Brianna's case is unusual. She says most students who participate in its programs improve about 15 or 20 percentile points on the standardized tests given after 90 hours of training.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) regulates advertising claims that companies make about their products. When asked specifically about its regulation of brain-training products, an FTC spokesperson said that the commission does not speculate about whether it will take action in a particular area.

A spokesperson for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) says brain

games that pose a low risk, such as those intended to help improve cognition, "would likely fall under the agency's enforcement discretion." Higher-risk games—those intended to diagnose or treat a specific disease—"may require FDA oversight to assure that such specific therapies and diagnosis are safe and effective." She adds, "We encourage companies who have questions to come talk with us."

Finn says, "What's unfortunate is that there might be something that has value, but we have to...understand what it is. We want to be careful and do the good science so you can say, 'OK, this is how it works and this is who it helps.'"

The problem is that much of the "science" touted by companies that sell brain-training games is weak or biased. Companies often conduct their own studies to test their products, so there's a profit motive to find positive results. Or the studies have too few participants to be statistically valid.

WHAT IS KNOWN

In one of the largest studies to date on brain training, researchers at Cambridge University in 2010 assigned more than 11,000 people to one of two brain-training regimens or to a control

group that was just asked to answer challenging questions on a computer. The brain games were designed to mirror the kinds of exercises available through companies such as Lumosity, CogniFit, and Fit Brains. They challenged short-term memory, planning, reasoning, problem solving, visuospatial skills, and math. After six weeks, the researchers found that people who did the brain training got better at the games they played, but didn't get any smarter overall.

Which is not to say that brain-training trials have come up completely empty.

In a study published in 2013 in *Nature*, Gazzaley found that a brain-training game he developed, called NeuroRacer, could help seniors improve their ability to multitask. He showed that improvements people saw could carry over into daily life, even six months later.

Another study published last year in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* found that seniors who did brain training to enhance memory, reasoning, and processing speed performed better than a control group 10 years after the study ended. NIH sponsored the study.

But neither the exercises used in NeuroRacer nor those in the NIH-sponsored study are available to the public. Gazzaley is working on a new version of his program, called EVO. He hopes to get FDA approval for EVO as a medical device and offer it to patients through doctors and other medical providers.

SharpBrains CEO Alvaro Fernandez thinks the concept of brain fitness will one day be as common as physical exercise. Today, the industry may be promising more than it can currently deliver.

"In principle, everyone can benefit from this, but it has to be personalized and it has to be relevant to the individual. We're not there right now."



IN SEASON

Green Giants

*By Erin O'Donnell**Recipes by Kathleen Zelman, MPH, RD, LD*

Do you have an aversion to Brussels sprouts? “I grew up eating them overcooked and thought they were horrible,” admits Judy Simon, MS, RD, CD, clinical dietitian at University of Washington Medical Center in Seattle. But when she moved to Washington, a top sprout-growing state, she tried them new ways, including roasted and sliced raw in salads. “I absolutely love them now,” she says. These leafy gems are packed with nutrition *and* terrific flavor when prepared properly. A member of the cabbage family, Brussels sprouts contain a mere 28 calories in a half cup, but more than 130% of your daily value of vitamin K, a key nutrient for bone health. They also contain glucosinolates, plant chemicals that may reduce your risk of certain cancers. “Just don’t overcook them like Grandma did,” Simon says. Roast, sauté, or steam them, and check out our recipes for other delicious options.

Slaw and Order

Shredding or slicing Brussels sprouts thin and pairing them with fruit and nuts is a novel way to introduce this star veggie to doubtful diners. Serve this slaw as a side dish with pork.

Brussels Sprout Slaw With Apples, Currants, and Walnuts

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

Dressing

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- ½ tsp salt
- freshly ground pepper

Slaw

- 1½ lbs Brussels sprouts, cleaned and shredded or thinly sliced
- 1 large apple, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup currants
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts, toasted

Directions

1. First, make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, honey, mustard, and salt and pepper.
2. In a large bowl, combine Brussels sprouts, apple, currants, and walnuts. Add salad dressing and toss thoroughly. Refrigerate 1–2 hours before serving.

Per serving

156 calories, 5 g protein, 20 g carbohydrate, 8 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 6 g fiber, 9 g sugar, 232 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 46%



Brussels sprouts were popularized in the U.S. by Thomas Jefferson, who planted them in the early 1800s.

Brussels sprouts were first grown in large numbers in Brussels, Belgium.

Bring Home the Bacon

The combination of roasted Brussels sprouts and delectable bacon will convert even the fiercest Brussels sprout skeptic. This dish calls for balsamic syrup, sometimes called balsamic glaze, a tasty condiment found in large grocery stores and gourmet shops.

Crispy Roasted Brussels Sprouts With Bacon

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

- 1½ lbs Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ¼ tsp salt
- freshly ground pepper
- 2 tbsp cooked, crumbled bacon (about 2 strips)
- 1 tbsp balsamic syrup
- 2 tbsp finely grated Parmesan cheese

Per serving

118 calories, 5 g protein, 12 g carbohydrate, 6 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 1 mg cholesterol, 4 g fiber, 5 g sugar, 231 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 47%

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. In a large bowl, toss Brussels sprouts, oil, and salt and pepper. Spread mixture in a single layer on an 11x17-inch baking sheet. Place pan in the upper half of the oven, and stir sprouts once after 15 minutes. Continue roasting until Brussels sprouts are brown and tender, about 25–30 minutes total.
3. Transfer Brussels sprouts to serving dish. Combine with bacon, drizzle with balsamic syrup, and garnish with cheese. Serve immediately.

Veg Out

This simple, satisfying dish is an easy way to get more vegetables in your day, and is a perfect meal to serve vegetarians. The recipe works especially well with toothsome pasta shapes, such as orecchiette (“little ears” in Italian) or rigatoni, which stand up well to the hearty vegetables.

Pasta With Roasted Brussels Sprouts and Cauliflower

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

- 1 lb Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- 1 lb cauliflower, cut into small florets (about ½ medium head)
- 1 large carrot, peeled and diced small
- 3 large shallots, chopped
- 3 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 12 oz whole grain pasta (such as orecchiette, fusilli, or rigatoni)
- ½ cup panko breadcrumbs
- ½ cup chopped fresh Italian parsley, divided
- freshly ground pepper
- ½ tsp salt
- juice of ½ lemon
- 2 tbsp feta cheese

Per serving

353 calories, 14 g protein, 60 g carbohydrate, 10 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 6 mg cholesterol, 10 g fiber, 5 g sugar, 326 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 25%

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450°F. Fill a large, heavy-bottomed pot with water and heat to boiling.
2. In a large bowl, toss Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, carrot, and shallots with 2 tbsp olive oil. Place vegetables in a single layer on an 11x17-inch baking sheet. Roast 25–30 minutes until soft and golden brown, stirring once or twice during cooking.
3. Cook pasta in the boiling water according to package directions. Drain well, reserving 1 cup of pasta water.
4. Pour remaining tablespoon of olive oil into a small skillet. Add breadcrumbs and toast over medium heat until golden brown (about 4 minutes). Transfer breadcrumbs to a small bowl and combine with 2 tbsp parsley. Set aside.
5. In a large serving bowl, toss together pasta,

roasted vegetables, remaining parsley, pepper and salt, and lemon juice. Gradually add reserved pasta water as needed to achieve desired consistency. Garnish with breadcrumb mixture and feta cheese. Serve immediately.

Brussels sprouts are at their peak in the U.S. from September until February.

Brussels sprouts are especially popular in Great Britain, which produces about six times the number grown in the U.S.

WebMD.com

What's Cooking!

Thousands of people turn to WebMD.com for meal inspiration every day. Here are the most-clicked recipes.*

Oatmeal-Chocolate Chunk Cookies

Chicken Curry With Rice

Chicken and White Bean Soup

Sautéed Flounder With Orange-Shallot Sauce

Sherried Mushrooms

*as of Oct. 1, 2014

OFF THE MENU

Kuniko Yagi

EXECUTIVE CHEF, HINOKI & THE BIRD
LOS ANGELES

By Matt McMillen

Chef Kuniko Yagi grew up in Japan, but her first restaurant job was waiting tables in a Los Angeles noodle shop. Now, 10 years after she moved to the United States, the bank executive turned executive chef runs the kitchen at L.A.'s highly regarded Hinoki & the Bird.

Restaurant work, says Yagi, 37, started out as a means rather than an end. She needed a job and did not want to return to the career in finance that she left behind in Japan.

"I wanted to have a skill set that would allow me to find a job anywhere in the world, and people eat no matter what," Yagi says.

A chance encounter with chef David Myers, coupled with a growing fascination with cooking, led to an audition at Myers' restaurant Sona. Within two weeks, the novice had earned a position as prep cook. Four years later, Myers promoted Yagi to chef de cuisine.

Sona closed in 2010, allowing Yagi an opportunity to travel and learn. She worked briefly in Michelin-starred restaurants in France and Japan. Then she rejoined Myers. Together, they conceived Hinoki & the Bird, which opened in 2013.

Reviewed by
Hansa Bhargava, MD
WebMD Medical Editor



APP BONUS!
Yagi's Tomato
and Avocado
Salad Recipe

Yagi describes her menu as California produce and ingredients paired with Japanese sensibilities. Many of the flavors remind her of her mother's home cooking, which taught Yagi about taste, if not technique.

A favorite from her mother's repertoire is the simple miso-marinated skirt steak recipe she shares here, which perfectly complements her tomato and avocado salad.

Yagi, a former contestant on Bravo's *Top Chef* and one of StarChef's 2010 Rising Stars,

has had to learn to care for herself as well as for her kitchen. Five years ago, her relentless 80- to-100-hour workweeks had pushed her to the verge of burnout. But she taught herself to better balance work and her life outside the kitchen, with a little help from her dog.

"The time I spend walking my dog each day is my Zen moment, when I empty myself," Yagi says. "I let myself be happy with him, chat with him, and connect with him."

Miso Skirt Steak*Makes 4 servings***Ingredients**

- 2 tbsp miso paste
- 2 tsp mirin
- 2 tsp sake
- 12 oz skirt steak
- 1 tsp canola oil
- 1 baby turnip, thinly shaved
- 1 green onion stalk, bias-cut
- chili thread for garnish

Directions

1. Mix miso paste, mirin, and sake in a bowl, then add skirt steak. Coat steak with the marinade. Cover the bowl and refrigerate 4 hours.
2. Preheat the grill.
3. Remove steak from the bowl and rub with canola oil to keep it from sticking on the grill. Grill until medium-rare (or your preferred temperature).
4. Remove from the grill, plate, then garnish with turnip, green onion, and chili thread.

Per serving

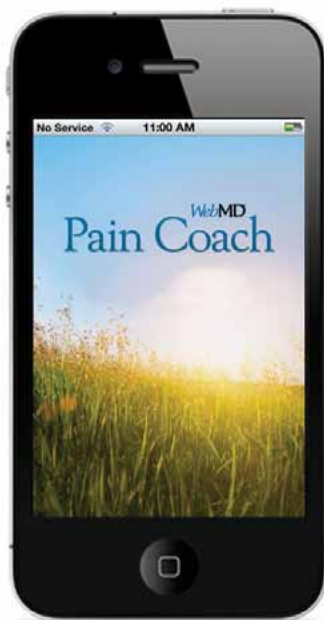
219 calories, 24 g protein, 6 g carbohydrate, 10 g fat (4 g saturated fat), 50 mg cholesterol, 1 g fiber, 3 g sugar, 427 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 42%



Pain Coach^{WebMD}

The essential iPhone app for people living with chronic pain.

- Personal journal to easily log pain levels, triggers, and more.
- Daily tips approved by WebMD doctors to help you meet your goals.
- Articles, slideshows, and videos related to your condition.
- Custom reports for better discussions with your doctor.



FOOD & FITNESS

FITNESS CHALLENGE

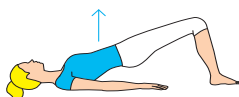
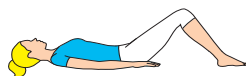
Back to You

ARE YOU A NEW MOM? EASE INTO A WORKOUT ROUTINE WITH THESE MOVES

By Karen Asp

● After having a baby, it's perfectly normal to feel as though your body is a little off. "Your back, shoulders, and hips are likely to feel tight," says Erica Ziel, a personal trainer in Newport Beach, Calif.

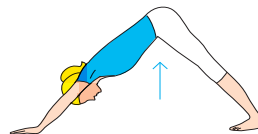
These three moves will soothe common sore spots and help ease you back into a fitness program. "When you do these stretches, use your core muscles to deepen the stretch and get your core strength back," Ziel says.



Hip Roll

What it does:
Opens up your lower back and hips

1. Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet shoulder-width apart, and arms along your sides. Press your lower back and heels into floor as you tilt your pelvis up.
2. Slowly raise your hips off the floor as high as you can. With your hips raised, bring your knees together and turn your toes toward each other. Slowly roll yourself down to the floor, one vertebra at a time, drawing in your ribs and keeping your knees pressed together.
3. Repeat 5–8 times.



Downward-Facing Dog

What it does:
Lengthens your lower back

1. Position yourself on the floor on all fours. Keep your wrists in line with your shoulders and your knees in line with your hips.
2. Slowly straighten your legs and lift your hips until your body forms a V-shape.
3. Work up to holding the pose 10 to 20 seconds. Release into child's pose. To do that, sit back on your heels, knees apart, and bend forward touching your forehead to your knees or the floor, with your arms extended in front of you.
4. Repeat three times.



Pigeon Pose

What it does:
Opens up your hips

1. Get on the floor on all fours. Move your right knee toward your right hand, then place your right leg on the floor in front of you with your right foot pointing toward your left hip.
2. Straighten your left leg behind you.
3. Sit up tall.
4. Slowly lower your upper body, leaning forward only as far as it feels good for your hips to stretch.
5. Hold for a minute, and then switch sides.
6. Repeat three times.

Reviewed by
David T. Derrer, MD
WebMD Medical Reviewer



WORK IT OUT

Club Dread

DO YOU HATE EXERCISE? WE HELP YOU FIGURE OUT WHY (AND HOW TO FIX IT)

By Joy Manning

● It's January, it's time for a fresh start, and you're determined to work out. But in the past, you've found it hard to stay active into February and beyond. Why? Turns out, the reasons might not be what you think. We track down why people dislike exercise and how to turn those issues on their heads.

You work out for weight loss. The desire to shed pounds is a top reason for starting a fitness program. But it's a surprisingly bad motivator when it comes to getting you to lace up those sneakers. In one study, women who exercised to feel better and curb stress worked out more than those who exercised to lose weight.

The fix: "Remind yourself often of all the ways exercise makes you feel good, like having more energy and getting better rest, that have nothing to do with weight loss," says nutrition expert Maryann Jacobsen, RD.

You go overboard. No doubt, exercise can be a big life change, but at the beginning it shouldn't be drastic. "Too many people dive in, overdo it, and then quit because it's just too much," says psychologist Leslie Becker-Phelps, PhD.

The fix: Ease into an exercise routine and start slowly, maybe with just five minutes of walking per day if you're not active now, Becker-Phelps says.

You feel bad about your body. Maybe you're self-conscious about your stomach when you do a sit-up, or you don't like the way you look in yoga pants. Or it might be more than



that. "For some people, exercising can dredge up feelings of being picked last in gym as a kid," says Rich Weil, MEd.

The fix: Weil recommends searching online for supportive activity groups for adults of all sizes. "Many YMCAs and private gyms offer these types of safe spaces," he says. Working out in the privacy of your own home is another option. Find a workout that's right for you on a DVD, YouTube channel, or podcast.

You choose the wrong workout. Sports psychologist Michelle Cleere, PhD, remembers working with a woman who really disliked exercise: "She told me, 'I hate the treadmill and I hate lifting weights.'" The woman tried to force herself to do these activities because she figured it was what you were supposed to do—until Cleere encouraged her to rethink her approach.

The fix: Try something you've always wanted to do or something you enjoyed in the past. "Biking, shooting baskets, dancing: These are the things we used to be passionate about but somewhere along the line just forgot," Cleere says.

You're in pain. A bad back, sore knee, or arthritis can make getting fit a challenge. But if you've got a chronic condition, you probably need exercise even more.

The fix: "Ask your doctor for a prescription for physical therapy," Weil says. "I'm amazed at the number of people who don't take this simple step. It can help so much, and it's often covered by insurance." A physical therapist will teach you safe ways to get fitter and stronger.

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WebMD[®] Checkup

TAKING CARE, LIVING WELL

January is National Blood Donor Month

Every two seconds someone in the United States needs blood. About 5 million people need blood every year. But people donate less often in the winter months because of holidays, travel, bad weather, and colds and flu. National Blood Donor Month is a campaign to encourage people to give blood now or pledge to give later.

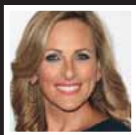
A blood donation is about one pint, which can save as many as three lives. Or it can contribute to saving one. A single car accident victim may need up to 100 pints of blood.

The national blood supply is sometimes low, because less than 40% of the population is eligible to give blood. And less than 10% of those eligible donate blood. About 9 million people per year make about 15 million blood donations. Accident victims, people with cancer, and people with sickle cell disease are among those who depend on donations.

Hospitals most often need type O blood. People of any blood type can use this blood type in an emergency.

Actor Marlee Matlin, pop stars Chayanne and Miley Cyrus, and NASCAR driver Greg Biffle are members of the American Red Cross National Celebrity Cabinet and speak out about the importance of blood donation. The nonprofit Music Saves Lives gives blood donors backstage passes to concerts and music festivals across the country.

—Sonya Collins



HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

CERVICAL CANCER

TIPS ON PREVENTING AND SCREENING FOR THE DISEASE

By **Heather Hatfield**

1 *Get tested*

Regular Pap smears screen for pre-cancer in the cervix.

2 *Protect against HPV*

Human papillomavirus is a main cause of cervical cancer. To help prevent HPV, the CDC recommends vaccination for girls and boys ages 11 or 12.

3 *Stay healthy*

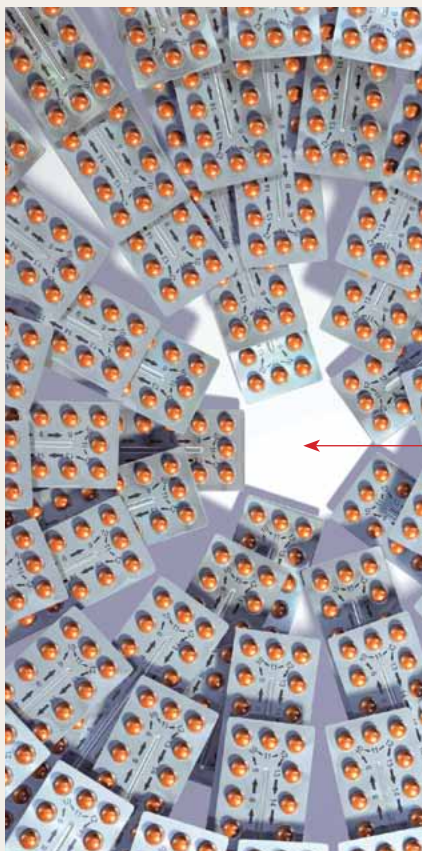
More than 15% of cervical cancer cases happen after age 65. Get regular screenings even as you get older.

4 *Quit it*

Smoking may double your risk of some types of cervical cancer. Stop now.

5 *Eat better*

A diet low in fruits and veggies may increase your risk of cervical cancer.



6 *Be conscious*

Cervical cancer symptoms include abnormal vaginal bleeding, discharge, or pain after sex.

7 *Use condoms*

This type of birth control lowers your risk of HPV infection. Practice safe sex.

8 *Monitor birth control*

Risk of cervical cancer goes up in women who take the pill for more than five years. Talk to your doctor about risks and benefits.

9 *Set limits*

Fewer sexual partners can reduce your risk of HPV.

10 *Watch your weight*

Women who are overweight are at higher risk. Drop the extra pounds and maintain a healthy weight.

EXPERT TIPS



Leslie A. Garrett, MD
gynecologic oncologist,

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston

“The amount you smoke and the risk of HPV-related lesions on the cervix is directly correlated. Women who quit smoking will have a stronger immune system to help clear the HPV virus that causes up to 100% of all cervical cancers.”



Kathleen M. Schmeler, MD
obstetrician-gynecologist, University of Texas
MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston

“HPV doesn’t just cause cervical cancer but also head and neck cancer, anal cancer, vulvar cancer, vaginal cancer, and penile cancer. So it’s important for women to get screened for cervical cancer and also get their children vaccinated with the HPV vaccine.”



Denise Sur, MD
vice chairman, UCLA Department of
Family Medicine

“A man can’t be tested for HPV, and if he has no symptoms, he and his partner have no way of knowing whether he has it. So always use protection to prevent HPV and cervical cancer.”

“A history of other sexually transmitted diseases means you are at a higher risk of also having HPV.”



Watch **What Is a Herniated Disc?**, a video at WebMD.com.
LEARN HOW ON PAGE 4

LIVING WITH BACK PAIN

HOW YOU CAN GET RELIEF WITH ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

By Kara Mayer Robinson

Did you know you can treat low back pain without drugs or surgery? These alternative therapies may bring you relief and help you live a more active life.

Acupuncture It's one of the best alternative treatments for low back pain, says Moshe Lewis, MD, a physiatrist at California Pacific Medical Center. The treatment involves inserting thin needles in your skin at specific points to help relieve pain, and you may feel relief after each session. That pain relief can last a few hours to a few weeks. Acupuncture is especially helpful if you have muscle spasms or nerve-related pain. To find a qualified acupuncturist, ask your doctor for a referral.

Massage "Massage is an excellent form of therapy to release tightness in your muscles," says Heather Tick, MD, a professor of integrative pain medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine. In one study, people who received one hour of massage once a week for 10 weeks had fewer symptoms, were more active, and spent less time in bed than people who had traditional treatments. Getting massage therapy regularly can help you feel less back pain for up to six months.



Exercise Being active releases pressure on your spine's discs. Regular exercise is important. Start a walking program, or try a workout routine that strengthens your muscles—both are good for long-term low back pain. Tai chi is another good choice, Tick says. If you work at a desk, take regular breaks, stand up, stretch, and walk.

Yoga and Pilates There's mounting evidence that yoga reduces back pain. Pilates is also helpful. Both bring relief by combining stretching and strength exercises. Try doing yoga three to four times a week. See if you can work up to an hour a day. Or sneak your exercises in when you

can: Do 10 minutes of yoga or Pilates when you wake up, do another 10 minutes before bed, and add extra exercises here and there.

Chiropractic spinal manipulation Spine adjustments from a chiropractor or other health care professional can reduce back pain, and may work just as well as other treatments. It's a good choice if you don't have nerve pain or

nerve damage, Lewis says. Try a set of 12 sessions of spinal manipulative therapy with a licensed chiropractor, osteopathic physician, or physical therapist. You'll probably feel better right away, and you may continue to find relief long after you're done. "It can last from a few hours to several months, typically after a set of treatments is complete," Lewis says.



ASK YOUR DOCTOR

1. How many sessions of acupuncture will I need to make a difference?
2. What type of massage therapy is best for me?
3. Is it OK to exercise at times when I have a lot of back pain?
4. If I choose yoga or Pilates, what can I do to make sure I don't injure my back?
5. If I try these alternative therapies, could I still need surgery?



MY STORY

POUND SIGNS

A READER OPENS UP ABOUT HOW HE LOST HALF OF HIS BODY WEIGHT

By William Streetman
WebMD.com community member

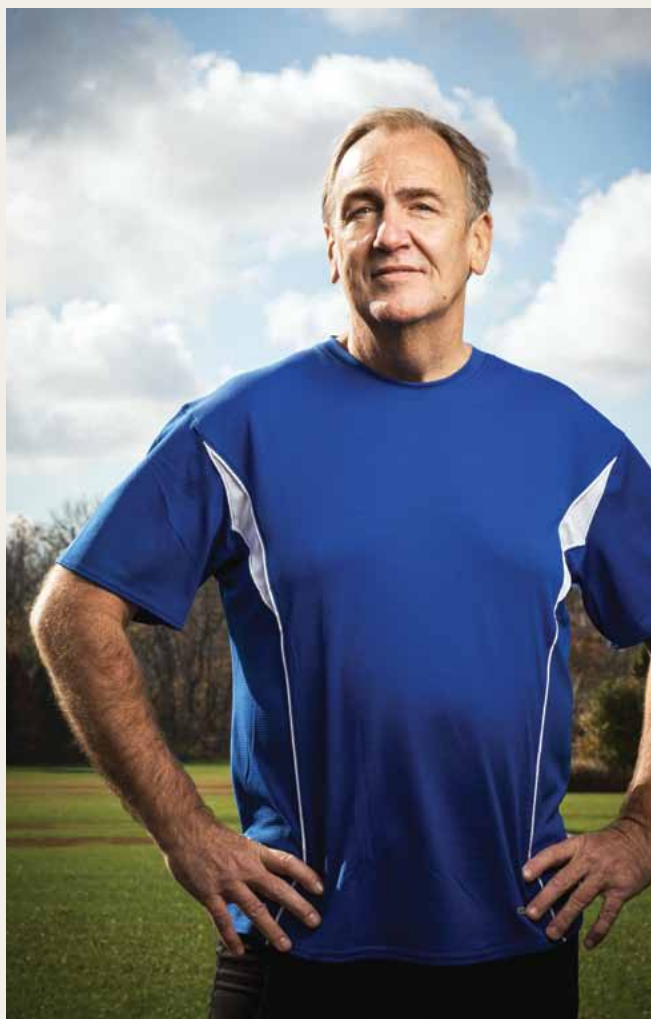
Four years ago I was 54 years old and weighed 404 pounds. Being overweight was something that sort of crept up on me. In my early 20s, I wasn't fat—I played softball and soccer with pickup teams and rode my bicycle.

Then I got married, had kids, and started a career. I was traveling, building my career, and overeating, overdrinking, not sleeping enough, and not taking care of myself. I didn't exercise because I felt too heavy to do it, and those destructive cycles just took over.

I was so big that I couldn't fit in theater seats, and I couldn't attend sporting events. I was deathly afraid of asking for a seatbelt extender on an airplane, or going to a restaurant and getting stuck sitting at a booth. My cholesterol was high.

One Saturday, I talked to my business partner about how we needed to take better care of ourselves. We were both out of shape and overweight—and I realized this was the 20th weekend in a row we were saying this. I thought to myself, "You either mean it or you don't. Which is it?"

I had tried to lose weight for about 20 years. My sister had suggested gastric



WILLIAM'S WISDOM

"Ask yourself: When does the rest of your life begin? The only answer is right now."

"Losing weight is not rocket science. Just eat less than you did yesterday and exercise more than you did yesterday, and you'll go in the right direction. You can fine-tune it as you go."

"Weight-loss surgery doesn't do the work for you. It's just a tool. It doesn't make you get out of bed and work out. You have to take control."

bypass, and I had a cousin who had the surgery. So I researched the different kinds of surgeries, met with a doctor at a weight-loss center, and everything just fell into place.

I had gastric bypass surgery on Oct. 4, 2010, a procedure called Roux-en-Y, where the doctor cut the top part of my stomach to make a small pouch and rerouted part of my small intestine.

I couldn't eat like I did before: If I ate too fast or one ounce too much I would throw up. I looked at gastric bypass as a tool that allowed me to eat to fuel my body and not for pleasure. I couldn't eat six Big Macs anymore—nor did I want to. Instead I ate a lot of little meals throughout the day, focusing on the vitamins, minerals, and protein my body needed.

Six months after the surgery I began training for a 5K. At first I couldn't even run 30 seconds. But I kept doing more every day.

One year after the surgery I had lost half my weight. Today I weigh 202 pounds, and I run 5Ks just for the fun of it. It seems like there's nothing I can't do at 58. When you pay that much attention to working out and eating right, your body just does amazing things.

BY THE NUMBERS

COLD AND FLU

FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT TOP HEALTH ISSUES

By Heather Hatfield

53,470
confirmed flu cases during the 2013–2014 season

5%–20%
the number of people in the U.S.
who get the flu in any given year

134
MILLION
vaccine doses given during
the 2013–2014 season

9,632
flu-associated
hospitalizations last season



1–2
weeks
time it takes for the flu to
run its course



3,000–49,000
range of all flu-related
deaths each year in the U.S.
over the past 30 years



105
flu-related deaths in
children last season

20
seconds
the length of time you should wash your hands with soap
and warm water to help prevent colds and flu

2–3
Average number of colds an
adult gets each year

200+
Viruses that
may cause the
common cold

1–4
days
amount of time before
symptoms start once the flu
virus enters the body

5–7
days
the time a person is
contagious once flu
symptoms start

#1
ranking of rhinovirus on the
list of viruses most likely to
cause colds



HEALTH CHECK

WOMEN'S HEART ATTACKS

● **Coquetterie**, who is in her early 40s, has had a dull aching feeling in her chest for days, plus pain in her middle back. "I am not short of breath but do feel pressure on my heart, which makes me feel the need to breathe deeply," she writes to WebMD's heart disease community. She also feels fatigued. "When do I take these symptoms seriously enough to go to a hospital?" Most doctors would tell her to go *now*, since these symptoms may signal an impending heart attack, the single most common cause of death in women. How much do you know about women's heart attacks?

QUIZ

1. A woman having a heart attack will always have severe, unmistakable symptoms.
☐ True ☐ False
2. Like men, women often have chest pain when they're having a heart attack.
☐ True ☐ False
3. Women can start having symptoms a week or more before a heart attack.
☐ True ☐ False
4. A woman who has a heart attack before age 50 will most likely survive.
☐ True ☐ False

Answers: **1. False.** Thanks to the movies, we expect a heart attack to involve crushing chest pain. But many heart attacks, in both men and women, start with mild pain or discomfort. These sensations can occur in the chest, in one or both arms, and in the back, neck, jaw, or stomach. Other possible symptoms: shortness of breath, a cold sweat, nausea, fatigue, and light-headedness. **2. True**—but not by much. Chest pain or discomfort is common in both women and men. Women are somewhat more likely than men, however, to have other symptoms, such as shortness of breath, back or jaw pain, and nausea or vomiting. **3. True.** A week or more before a heart attack, many women notice new or different symptoms, including unusual fatigue, sleep disturbance, shortness of breath, or indigestion. **4. False.** A heart attack for a woman under the age of 50 is twice as likely to be fatal as one for a man the same age.

SOURCES: NIH, Department of Health and Human Services, American Heart Association, Women's Heart Foundation, WebMD Heart Disease Health Center

? ASK YOUR DOCTOR

1. What are my risk factors for heart disease and heart attack?
2. What can I do to reduce my risk?
3. What should I do if I have possible early warning symptoms, such as shortness of breath?
4. What steps should I take if I think I'm having a heart attack?

Marcia Gay Harden

Actor

1 The world is about to see you in the film version of the best-selling book *Fifty Shades of Grey*. Were you nervous to appear in it? No. The film raises questions about eroticism and pleasure and things we really don't talk about. I'm glad we don't! I don't want to discuss every single aspect of sexuality over the breakfast table. Yet, there is this fascinating world of what happens in the bedroom when [a couple] takes their journey one step further. And for me, the core of that journey is trust.

2 You play Christian Grey's mother. Is it a good role? I represent an extremely important archetype in the film's explorations of women. My character is the educated working mom, a doctor. I love the examples she sets. I've been sending out a series of naughty tweets [in character] addressed to Christian. One of them said: "Just remember that a woman's greatest sexual organ is her brain. Love, Mama Grey."

3 Why do you think the book was such a sensation? This book is written in the style



Fifty Shades of Grey opens in theaters Feb. 14.

Read the full Q&A with Marcia Gay Harden in our free apps!

of all great romances. And it's made furry handcuffs more acceptable.

4 Do you think Hollywood promotes a healthy or unhealthy notion of sex? I don't like to make blanket statements about the media. The media is a group of individuals. A bigger issue for me is that young boys are learning about sex from [violent] porn.

Boys learn this, girls accept it—that disturbs me far more than some erotic movie where an actor shows a boob or a butt.

5 You have three kids. What's your greatest 21st-century parenting challenge? I'm a single mother. Traditions of family dissipated in divorce. I try to build upon things that keep us

connected to history and to stay embedded in great culture with my kids. Sometimes it scares me that those classic, rich tapestries of history—music and opera and art—will all be replaced by Tumblr.

6 Many women battle the need to be perfect. Do you? The hardest thing on a day-to-day basis is to have patience and to

choose my battles. The biggest issue is time. I don't have the time to do everything I want to do or to always be the mother I want to be. What I do is good enough. It's good enough!

7 What was the best health advice your parents ever gave you? Whatever rule they gave, I broke. Your parents give you structure—you tear down the walls. The foundation is what you need. My mother always swam and ate well. Now I swim and eat well. I stay active.

8 How else do you stay fit? I have no routine. I'm a hot mess! I want to be that girl at yoga, trim and fit, but I'm not. I jog on the beach. I make sure I get at least 10,000 steps every day.

9 What's your secret indulgence, food or otherwise? I love juicing. I love ginger. I love cayenne pepper, all that hot stuff.

10 What's your take on aging? I'm not against a refresher, here or there. If your eyes are baggy and you want to lift them, fine! But stay looking like yourself. I see a lot of women with intense face-lifts.—**Lauren Paige Kennedy**