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9 sex

NEW PAP TEST GUIDELINES

10 cancer

HAIRDRESSER AS LIFESAVER?

19 fit kids

PARENTS, SKIP THE FOOD REWARDS

20 sleep

IS YOUR TEEN SLEEP-TEXTING?

23 recipe

PINEAPPLE SHRIMP KEBABS

26 beauty

TIPS FOR A HEALTHY SMILE

38 allergies

ALLERGY-PROOF YOUR HOME

39 mind

DO YOU HAVE THE BABY BLUES?



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about
*WebMD
the Magazine*
for iPad!

BALANCED BEAM

ANNA KENDRICK
HAS A LOT TO
30 SMILE ABOUT

SUN DAY BEST

BEAUTY PICKS
FOR YOUR
16 BEACH BAG

SMASH HIT

Uma Thurman
puts motherhood
center stage

32

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May 2012

features

wellness Smash Hit

32

Best known for her roles in the films *Kill Bill* and *Pulp Fiction*, actor **Uma Thurman** hits the small screen in a big way in her first TV role on NBC's *Smash*. But motherhood is still, and always has been, center stage for the mom of two, who's got baby No. 3 on the way. WebMD contributing writer **Gina Shaw** talks to Thurman about her work with Room to Grow, an organization that helps low-income parents get their babies off to a healthy start. **PLUS:** Busy moms, take note: Experts explain why "balancing it all" is a myth.



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contents

WebMD
webmd.com the Magazine

spotlight

14 skin care Screen Test

Wondering whether last year's bottle of sunscreen is still OK to use? We debunk four of the most common SPF myths.



WebMDSmile

p. 26 The Great Eight
Expert tips to keep your mouth in tiptop shape.

p. 29 Tiny Teeth
What's the right age for your child's first visit to the dentist?

p. 30 Balanced Beam
Actor Anna Kendrick opens up about finding comfort in her success.



COVER PHOTO BY JAMES WHITE/CORBIS OUTLINE

3 Editor's Note

6 Healthy Start

Mom's the word this month! Celebrate women and healthy living with our four quick tips.

9 WebMD Wire

How to make sure Little Leaguers play it safe, why berries are good for your brain, what you need to know about the new Pap test guidelines, and how your hairdresser just might save your life.



11 Click Here

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take the test you can take to your doctor

ASSESSMENTS, QUIZZES, AND REFERENCE INFORMATION ON EVERY PAGE

38 allergies
Allergy-proof your home

39 mind
Do you have the "baby blues"?

12 Health Highlights

May is Better Sleep Month. Rest easy with expert shut-eye tips.

13 Medical File

Actor **Jennifer Esposito** helps others with celiac disease. **PLUS:** TV host **Amanda de Cadenet**'s new show celebrates the health benefits of girl talk and female friendship.

16 Living Well

16 You Asked What's in your beach bag? Get ready for summer with our expert beauty product picks.

19 Health Matters

19 fit kids

Sweet Rewards? Praising children with food can send the wrong health message. Our expert explains why.

20 sleep

Night Moves First there was sleep-eating, now there's sleep-texting. That's right—and your kids are probably doing it.

23 Healthy Eats

23 Anatomy of a Pineapple Say aloha to the health benefits of this golden fruit.

40 WebMD Checkout

Actor **Vanessa Williams** dishes on her eating habits, her personal health philosophy, and why she wrote a book with her role model: her mother.



May just naturally seems to belong to mothers. It must be all that budding and hatching and growing going on (though I have to point out that certain fruit trees outside my office window burst into full bloom several weeks ahead of schedule. Show-offs!).

This month is all about moving into warmth and light, to better things and our better selves. And that's what moms do best. They're the ones who nudged us along, the ones who got us up and moving every morning and eventually out on the road to our own lives.

At the moment, I'm watching my mother move, or trying to move. She's taking her first tentative steps after knee-replacement surgery a few weeks ago. As she gingerly picks up a foot and places it back down, testing her weight and adjusting her balance, I hold my breath and focus on her with the same rapt attention she must have had watching my first steps as a baby. "Be careful, Mom." I can hear her voice, saying the same thing to my 10-month-old self.

Our cover mom this issue, **Uma Thurman**, watches the very tiniest of beings make their first moves into life. She's a founding board member of Room to Grow, a nonprofit that provides goods and services to low-income families who might otherwise go without supplies, clothing, and toys for their newborns. The group also helps parents find housing, work, and education. Learning about the pervasive lack of services for children in poverty from birth to age 3, Thurman says, "brought it so close to home, to imagine what it would be like to face [becoming a parent] without a job, without resources, without support."

Vanessa Williams is another mom in this issue who pays tribute to the support we all need in our early years. She authored a book with her "no-nonsense" mom to record the life they've shared. Did they endure some rocky times? Indeed—Williams includes words like "survived" and "loss" in the book's title, along with "love"—but she tells us that "writing a book with my mom allowed me to reflect on what made me me."

Mothers do help make us, but like May itself, the process continually unfolds and evolves. My mom and I joke that her baby steps today will be running leaps in a few months, and she'll challenge me to a half-marathon. Maybe, maybe not. I'm pretty sure we'll settle for a brisk stroll around the neighborhood. We'll be moving. That's the most important thing.

For all your healthy moves this month, visit **WebMD.com** for answers, support, and trusted healthy living information.

Enjoy,

Colleen Paretty

Colleen Paretty
Executive Editor, WebMD the Magazine



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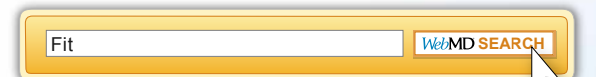
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MAY DAYS

Mom's the word this month



fit tip

FAMILY TIES

"Do as I say and as I do" is a good motto for parents. "It's really important for your child to see you enjoying fitness," says WebMD's Raising Fit Kids expert, Hansa Bhargava, MD. "Kids learn from what you do rather than what you say." **Incorporate week-end fitness rituals into your family schedule to introduce new, healthy habits.** She suggests playing old-school games such as hopscotch and Frisbee, or getting the family outside for a hike.

BASES LOADED

America's favorite pastime doesn't have to add to your waistline—you can eat healthy, even at the local ballpark. Kathleen Zelman, MPH, RD, LD, WebMD's director of nutrition, notes that you'll still find traditional stadium fare, such as "foot-long hot dogs and giant sausages that are calorie-, sodium-, and fat-bombs," but many parks are stepping up to the plate with healthier options, such as lettuce wraps at L.A.'s Dodger Stadium. For more traditional ballpark snacks, munch on soft pretzels with mustard, whole peanuts, and plain popcorn.



healthy eats

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skin care

DOUBLE DUTY

"With all the other stresses in life," says Karyn Grossman, MD, WebMD skin care expert, "women just don't have the time for multi-step beauty regimens." **Get pretty and save time with SPF- and antioxidant-infused moisturizers** such as Shiseido The Skincare Tinted Moisture Protection SPF 20 (\$38) or Physician's Formula Healthy Wear SPF 50 Tinted Moisturizer (\$14.95). For lips, try tinted, hydrating SPF lip balms such as Burt's Bees (\$7) or Maybelline Baby Lips (\$3.99).

LADIES FIRST

Take charge of your well-being during **National Women's Health Week (May 13–19)**. Health organizations nationwide sponsor events to empower women to make their physical and mental health a top priority. The Santa Fe Osteoporosis Center, for example, provides free bone-density screenings and educational sessions about osteoporosis. To find an event in your area, go to womenshealth.gov/whw/events and search by state.

give back



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: RIGHT: BRIAN HAGIWARA/GETTY IMAGES; BLEND IMAGES/GLOW IMAGES; JIRKA/COVER; DIGITAL VISION/GETTY IMAGES

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I never feel more alive than when I'm performing. Being diagnosed with chronic hepatitis C was quite a shock. Since singing is my life, I decided to take action. I met with my doctors and we talked about my options. Now I'm back on stage and using my voice to help spread the word — if you have chronic hepatitis C, doing nothing is not an option.

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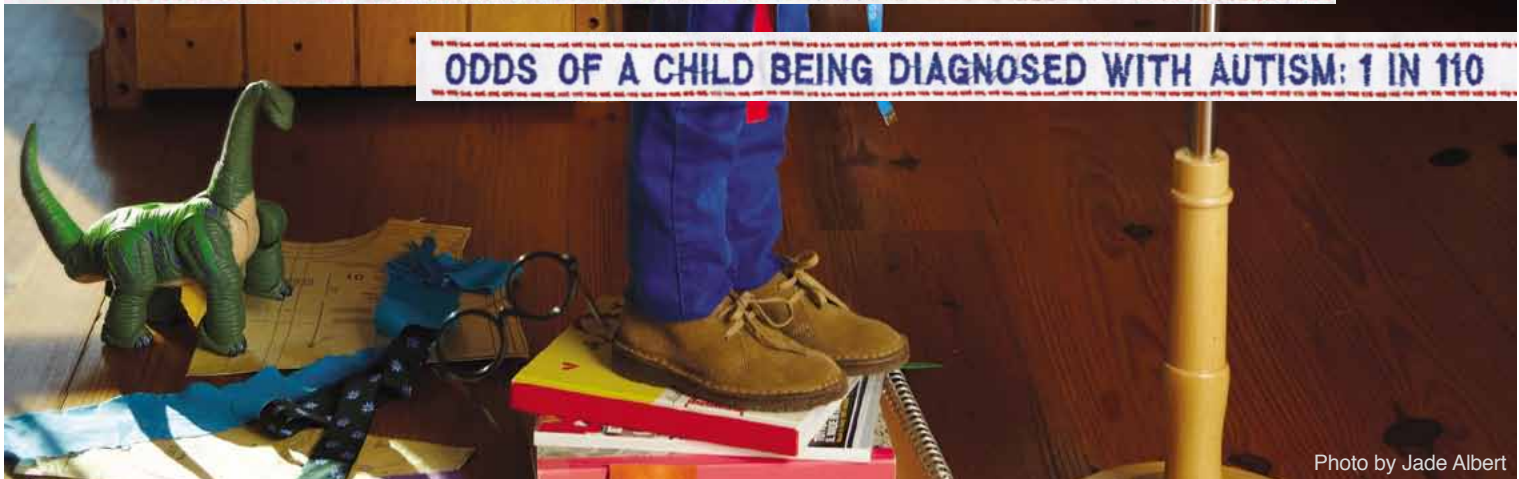


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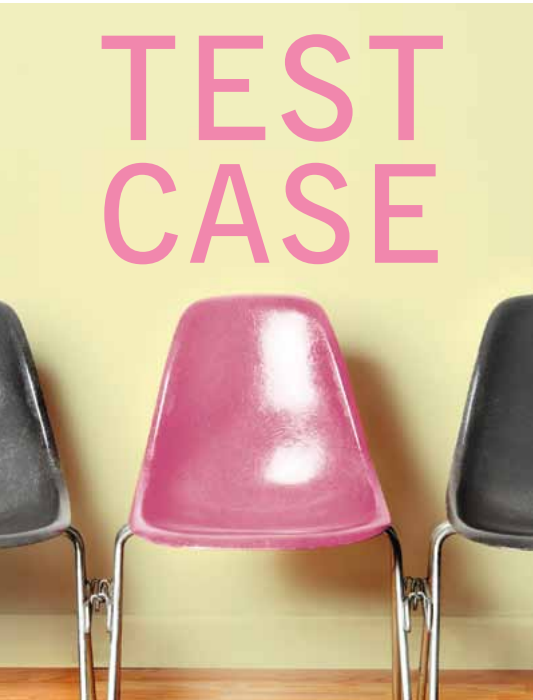
Some signs to look for:

No big smiles or other joyful expressions by 6 months	No babbling by 12 months	No words by 16 months
-------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------	-----------------------



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TEST CASE

According to new guidelines, many women no longer need Pap tests to screen for cervical cancer every three years, and women younger than age 21 don't need them at all. As long as they get tested for human papillomavirus (HPV) at the same time—and if their last Pap and HPV tests were negative—women ages 30 to 65 can go five years between Pap tests, according to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. (Chronic HPV infection can cause cervical cancer.)

Earlier guidelines from the task force recommended screening start at age 21 or within three years of becoming sexually active, whichever came first.

The harm of more frequent screening, such as a greater chance of abnormal results that may lead to invasive testing, outweighs the benefits of early detection of slow-growing cervical cancer, the task force says. This doesn't mean women should skip regular checkups, the group adds. Check with your doctor to see how often you need a Pap test.

Source: *Annals of Internal Medicine*

If you're trying to get pregnant, an easy bike ride could help—but you might want to hold off training for a triathlon. A Boston University School of Public Health study finds that moderate exercise, done for any length of time, slightly reduced time to pregnancy for women of all body types. Intense exercise, on the other hand, appeared to increase time to conception for normal weight women.

Experts know that excessive, strenuous exercise can disrupt a woman's ovulation cycle, but researchers say they were surprised to find that even relatively small amounts of intense exercise seemed to affect fertility. Normal-weight women in the study who said they exercised vigorously five or more hours a week were 42% less likely to get pregnant in any given month than women who did not exercise at all. The harder they worked out, the lower their probability of conceiving. Vigorous exercise did not delay conception in overweight women.

About 3,000 women who were trying to conceive but were not getting infertility treatment answered questions about their activity level. Running, aerobics, gymnastics, swimming, and intense bicycling were considered vigorous exercise, while brisk walking, leisurely cycling, golfing, and gardening were considered moderate exercise.

Source: *Fertility and Sterility*



BABY STEPS



People who have even minor damage to blood vessels of the retina that can lead to a condition called retinopathy are at higher risk of developing memory and thinking problems as they age, research suggests. In fact, retinopathy may be an important clue that blood vessels in the brain aren't working properly, researchers say.

Researchers from the University of California, San Francisco, examined data from the Women's Health Initiative, a study with more than 500 older women. For up to 10 years, the women underwent annual evaluations of memory and thinking skills. They also had an eye exam about four years after the study began and a brain scan at about eight years. About 7.6% of the women had retinopathy, though their vision wasn't measurably worse than that of women without the condition. However, they scored lower on memory and thinking tests, and scans found more evidence of blood vessel damage in their brains.

Source: *Neurology*



With baseball season in full swing, the American Academy of Pediatrics has a heads-up for coaches and parents about how to keep young players injury-free. Baseball is one of the most popular youth sports in the United States, with more than 8.6 million children ages 6 to 17 playing each year. While it has a low rate of injury compared with other sports, researchers say the

injuries tend to be worse, with proportionally more broken bones.

The new guidelines suggest that pitchers stop throwing immediately if they feel arm fatigue or pain, and that all players wear appropriate protective gear, including rubber-spiked shoes, batting helmets with face protection, and athletic cups. Coaches should have access to an automated external defibrillator in case of a cardiac emergency, and officials should postpone games if players are at risk because of extreme weather conditions, such as lightning or excessive heat. Parents and coaches should recognize that not all children mature at the same rate, and that repeated instruction and practice are essential.

Source: Pediatrics



BRAIN FRUIT

Here's some berry good news for your brain: Topping your daily breakfast cereal with a handful of berries can help stall brain disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia.

A study by researchers from the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Agricultural Research Service Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging found evidence that fruits such as blueberries, blackberries, cranberries, and strawberries benefit brain-signaling pathways involved in inflammation and cell death.

It also showed that berries help aging brains in several ways: by protecting cells against damage from harmful molecules called free radicals, by changing the way neurons in the brain communicate with each other, and by preventing inflammation that can lead to cell damage.

Source: Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry



CHAIR TALK

Your hairdresser understands your style, your job woes, and the ups and downs of your relationship, right? She may also be able to tell something else about you: changes on your scalp, face, or neck that could indicate skin cancer.

In a study of 203 hairdressers from 17 salons in the Houston area, researchers led by a doctor at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston found that 37% reported looking at most of their clients' scalps for suspicious skin changes. Also, 29% checked most clients' necks, and 15% looked for skin changes on most clients' faces. Almost 60% of the hairdressers said they have recommended a client get a suspicious mole checked out.

Nearly three-quarters of the hairdressers said they hadn't received any formal training about skin cancer. But many expressed an interest in learning more about it and educating clients.

Researchers recommend that future research focus on how to set up programs to teach stylists more about skin cancer and health communication.

Source: Archives of Dermatology

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Energy Eats



Eating breakfast, smart carbs, and lean meats can boost your mood and your energy level for your workouts as well as everyday performance. Get the skinny in **WebMD's Energy Foods slideshow**.

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7. Cold sores
8. When your cat is a picky eater
9. The truth about detox diets
10. Spot reduction: myth or fact

*as of 4/1/2012

Plantar Fasciitis

TOP SYMPTOMS INCLUDE

- ▶ Pain in the bottom of the heel
- ▶ Stiffness in the bottom of the foot
- ▶ Swelling or redness on the foot

Plantar fasciitis develops when the thick tissue that connects the heel bone to the toes (and creates the foot's arch) becomes inflamed from overuse or stretching. Flat feet or high arches increase your risk of plantar fasciitis. So does obesity, activities that involve running, dancing, or jumping, and wearing shoes that provide poor arch support. Pain in the foot can be dull, sharp, aching, or burning and is usually worse first thing in the morning. A doctor uses a physical exam and sometimes an X-ray to diagnose the condition. Treatment includes non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications, heel-stretching exercises, ice, rest, shoe inserts, prescription steroids, and shoes with more support. In rare cases, a doctor may recommend surgery. While plantar fasciitis can last as long as 18 months, prompt diagnosis and sticking with a treatment plan helps ease symptoms faster.



Key in your symptoms

FIND THE ANSWER

Boys to Men

Body odor, growth spurts, hormones...teenage boys can be a mystery—to their parents and to themselves. Get to the bottom of what they're going through in WebMD's brand new **Teen Boys Health Center**.



teen boys center [WebMD SEARCH](#)



On her show, de Cadenet (right) gets up close and personal with celebs like Gwyneth Paltrow.

Woman to Woman

Amanda de Cadenet's *The Conversation* celebrates girl talk

How's this for a Mother's Day treat? Lifetime Network's new series *The Conversation* with Amanda de Cadenet debuted April 26, with alpha females Gwyneth Paltrow, Jane Fonda, Portia de Rossi, and Lady Gaga (to name a few) discussing things women gab about with their closest girlfriends.

Hosted by former British TV presenter and current Los Angeles-based photographer Amanda de Cadenet and executive-produced by actor Demi Moore, the show explores women's health and well-being, tackling topics like body image, pregnancy, work/family balance, aging, and grief. It celebrates women's penchant for emotional intimacy, underscoring research that links female friendships with longevity and good health.

"Creating a community of girlfriends is one of the most important things we can do," says de Cadenet, 40, who wants to inspire honest dialogue. "My girlfriends have carried me through everything—the show role-models those conversations."

A mother of three and onetime tabloid fixture, de Cadenet is the ex-wife of Duran Duran's John Taylor and current spouse of The Strokes guitarist Nick Valensi—and the first to say she's learned every lesson the hard way.

Her guests are equally frank. In an age of publicist-controlled sound bites, it's unusual to hear Paltrow describe her difficulty connecting with her second baby, Fonda admitting she's only recently begun to feel fulfilled, de Rossi discussing the eating disorder that shrunk her frame to a skeletal 82 pounds, and Gaga insisting she wouldn't dare undo her teenage mistakes.

For a who's who of guests who have signed up to dissect womanhood, go to www.theconversation.tv.—Lauren Paige Kennedy

G-Free to Be

Actor Jennifer Esposito helps others with celiac disease

When Jennifer Esposito was finally diagnosed with celiac disease three years ago, the actor was both shocked and relieved. "It was hard, but it was also the day I realized the person I once knew as 'me' was gone," says Esposito, 39, who plays detective Jackie Curatola on the CBS hit police drama *Blue Bloods*.

Misleading advice and a delayed diagnosis cost Esposito precious "life" time as she searched for the reasons behind a litany of unexplained ailments, she says. Now she's determined to save others from the same pain and frustration by raising awareness of celiac disease—also the goal during May, National Celiac Disease Awareness Month.

Shortly after learning she had celiac disease, Esposito launched Jennifer's Way, a website and blog (www.jennifersway.org) to help others "learn to live again, gluten-free." She has nearly 6,500 followers on Twitter (@JennifersWayJE), and a cookbook, food product line, and bakery in New York City in the works. "This is so rewarding, the second chapter of my life," she says. "I'm grateful to be able to give something back."

Two million people in the United States have celiac disease. The condition isn't a food allergy; eating gluten causes the body's immune system to damage the fingerlike villi lining the small intestine that allow nutrients from food to be absorbed into the bloodstream. As a result, the body is not able to take in nutrients effectively.

Growing up, Esposito recalls telltale signs as a youngster and a life regularly interrupted by illness, even as she tried to lead a healthy lifestyle. She says she learned to map out the closest bathroom; celiac can bring on symptoms like queasy stomach, gas, and diarrhea. Celiac disease also tends to run in families. Esposito's older sister, Suzanne, was eventually diagnosed.

Gluten shows up in products containing wheat, barley, and rye. And it can "hide" in soy and other sauces, processed foods, and medicines and vitamins.

"Now I'm a food detective—food gives me life, but I know it could also harm me," Esposito says. "Listen, for your body will tell you what it wants and needs."—Stephanie Stephens



LEFT: STEPHEN LOVENKIN/GETTY IMAGES; STEVEN PERILLOUX

GIRL IN BED: CHRIS BERNARD/ISTOCKPHOTO.COM; MAN RESTING: JUSTIN HORROCKS/ISTOCKPHOTO.COM; WHITE BEDDING: KARAM MIRI/ISTOCKPHOTO.COM



May

A month of tips to boost your sleep smarts

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
SLEEP TROUBLE? Identify your problem and get expert tips for restful nights at WebMD.com's Sleep Disorders Health Center .	1 NATIONAL 8 HOURS IN BED DAY Don't doze on the couch. Curl up in bed for a proper night's sleep. Then, share how refreshed you are with the Better Sleep Council at facebook.com/stopsleepingaround .	3	4 TIME OUT You need to cool down before you lie down, so finish your workout at least three hours before calling it a night.	5	10	
6 NOD SENSE If you regularly shortchange yourself on sleep, you can't fully catch up. Try to get enough each night.	7	14 OUT WITH THE OLD The comfort and support of a good mattress are key to good sleep. If yours is 8 to 10 years old, shop for a new one.	16	17 COOL IT A slightly cool room mimics your body's drop in temperature during the night and helps you sleep.	19 UNPLUG Clear out computers, TVs, and other attention-grabbing gizmos from your bedroom.	
20	21	23	24 SACRED SPACE Your bed is meant only for sleeping (and sex). You'll sleep better if you respect that rule.	27 LOSE THE BOOZE A few drinks might help you relax, but alcohol disrupts sleep, leaving you unrefreshed the morning after.	29	30 SLEEP TECH Your smartphone can ease you into sleep (just don't use it for any other purpose while you're in bed). Try a meditation app like "Simply Being" (for iPhone and Android).

Get more tips for your best sleep. WebMD.com

spotlight

skin care

Screen Test

Four common myths
about sunscreen debunked

By Katrina Woznicki, WebMD Contributing Writer

UVA, UVB, SPF...Confused about sunscreen? Summer's just around the corner, so now's the time to set the record straight.

Here's why: Being outdoors without proper protection from ultraviolet light increases your risk for sunburn, wrinkles, and skin cancer, the most common type of cancer in the United States. More than 3.5 million cases of non-melanoma skin cancers are diagnosed each year, and the American Cancer Society projects 76,250 new cases of melanoma will be diagnosed this year.

Two types of ultraviolet light affect the skin: UVB, which mainly causes sunburn, and UVA, which penetrates the skin more deeply and can lead to wrinkles. Both UVA and UVB can cause skin cancer. Despite the dangers, myths about sunscreen and how to protect your skin persist. Here are four of the most common:

Myth 1: I can skip it. Sunscreen is not just for sun worshippers. "If you're going to be outdoors, you should wear sunscreen, even when it's cloudy outside. You can still get sunburn through cloud cover," says Jennifer Stein, MD, PhD, assistant professor of dermatology at NYU Langone Medical Center.

Reviewed by
Louise Chang, MD
WebMD SENIOR MEDICAL EDITOR



Think your naturally dark skin doesn't need sunscreen? Think again. "People with darker skin are definitely less likely to burn, but they can still burn and should wear some form of sunscreen that protects against UVA and UVB," Stein says.

If you skip sunscreen because you don't like how it feels on your skin, shop around. "There are so many on the market," says James Spencer, MD, a doctor in St. Petersburg, Fla., and a member of the American Academy of Dermatology. "Don't give up."

Myth 2: All sunscreens are the same.

Not so. Sunscreens' protective effects differ. While some use physical barriers such as zinc oxide and titanium dioxide to deflect UV radiation and stop it from reaching the skin, others use chemicals such as avobenzone, ecamsule, and oxybenzone to absorb UV radiation.

Which product offers the best protection? Look for a sunscreen that offers a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher and provides "broad-spectrum" coverage (against both UVA and UVB light).

Myth 3: A little sunscreen will see me through the day.

The opposite is true. You'll need to reapply, every two hours or so, because sunscreen fades away with time. And don't be stingy. "To cover your whole body, you would have to fill a shot glass," Stein says.

If you're swimming or sweating, you may need to reapply more often. The FDA doesn't allow sunscreen makers to claim products are waterproof or sweatproof, but they can say water-resistant if the label specifies a time range, generally either 40 minutes or 80 minutes while swimming or sweating.

Myth 4: Last year's bottle is still OK.

"You should use enough so that you're not using the same bottle summer after summer. If you're doing it right, you're not going to have leftovers next year," Stein says.

Check the expiration date. "Some sunscreens break down quickly, especially those that give you UVA protection. So it shouldn't sit in your bathroom cabinet for too long," she adds.

Get more coverage with **sunscreen do's and don'ts.**



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*American Journal of Preventive Medicine, August 2008



Bag Check

Getting ready for beach season? Make sure your tote includes these expert product picks

Block Buster
Keep harmful rays away with **Banana Boat Sport Performance Active Dry Protect SPF 50**.

Chill Out
Soothe sunburned skin with **Crabtree & Evelyn Aloe Vera Hydrating Body Lotion**.

Oil Change
Rub a bit of **J.F. Lazartigue Sun Protection Oil** on your hair to protect it.

Save Face
Noncomedogenic **Neutrogena Sport Face SPF 70+** guards against damaging rays.

Lip Service
Protect your pucker with **Banana Boat Aloe Vera with Vitamin E** lip balm.

You asked!

Q. What are the beauty must-haves for my summer beach bag?



Jamie Pearlman, 27, human resources analyst, Howard Beach, N.Y.

A. Start your summer beauty kit off right with sunscreens for face and body. For the face, try **Neutrogena Sport Face SPF 70+** (\$9.99). It's noncomedogenic, which means it won't clog pores or worsen acne.

For the body, I recommend **Banana Boat Sport Performance Active Dry Protect SPF 50** (\$8.99), which is super-moisturizing and doesn't leave a pasty film on the skin. Remember that even water-resistant sunscreen won't last more than two hours when you're sweating and swimming, so reapply often.

Skin cancer often occurs on the lips, so toss an SPF-infused lip balm like **Banana Boat Aloe Vera with Vitamin E** (\$1.97) into your bag. It has SPF 45, and you can apply underneath lip gloss or lipstick.

Don't forget to pack a big, floppy hat to protect your scalp from UV rays. But a hat won't guard against indirect sun exposure, so play it safe by wearing a sun-protective topper (look for the "UPF" label) and sunscreen for your hair. I like **J.F. Lazartigue Sun Protection Oil** (\$48). Rub a bit of the oil on your part to protect the scalp there as well.

If you do burn, first apply cold compresses or take a cool bath to relieve the sting. Take an anti-inflammatory medication, such as ibuprofen, to reduce the pain and swelling, and apply a light aloe lotion like **Crabtree & Evelyn Aloe Vera Hydrating Body Lotion** (\$22) to help soothe skin.

Arielle Kauvar, MD, founder, New York Laser & Skin Care, New York City



CHUNG LEE

A. No beach bag is complete without a UVA/UVB-blocking sunscreen. **Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Dry-Touch Sunblock SPF 55** (\$9.50) is great for people who don't like the feel of a greasy sunscreen. While most sunscreens focus on protecting against UVB (the sun rays that can burn skin), those that contain helioplex (like this one) also protect against UVA (the aging rays that, like UVB, have been linked to melanoma).

The best way to wear sunscreen is to apply it first thing in the morning, and then wait 15 to 20 minutes before heading outdoors so it absorbs completely. During a sunup-to-sundown beach day, come indoors for a lunch break from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., when the sun is at its peak, and reapply before going back outside.

If you're prone to dryness, try **CeraVe Facial Moisturizing Lotion AM SPF 30** (\$13.99). It's great for everyday use and is infused with hyaluronic acid, a humectant that sits on top of the skin and attracts water from the air. Don't forget to coat your neck, chest, and the tops of your ears.

If you do accidentally burn, take down the inflammation fast with a thin layer of aloe vera gel. It's more than 90% H₂O, so it has an instant cooling effect, rather like a blanket of water. Top that with a coat of 1% hydrocortisone cream like **Cortizone 10 Creme with Aloe** (\$5.99) a couple times a day.

The one beach-bag product to splurge on is a topical antioxidant, which can neutralize harmful molecules called free radicals and defend against environmental damage. Vitamin C in the form of L-ascorbic acid is one of my favorites, and it's abundant in **SkinCeuticals Serum 10 AOX+** (\$86). Use it under your sunscreen for an additional layer of protection against summer's harsh outdoor elements.—Ayren Jackson-Cannady

Lisa Ginn, MD, Skin@LRG, Chevy Chase, Md.



CHUNG LEE 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.

Dry Idea
Get grease-free sun protection with **Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Dry-Touch Sunblock SPF 55**.

Radical Idea
The vitamin C in **SkinCeuticals Serum 10 AOX+** helps neutralize free radicals.

Face the Day
Start your morning with sun protection from **CeraVe Facial Moisturizing Lotion AM SPF 30**.

Burn Out
Try **Cortizone 10 Creme with Aloe** to relieve sunburn pain.

Message in a Bottle

New regulations developed by the FDA for sunscreens sold over the counter in the United States will take effect this summer, says Arielle Kauvar, MD, founder of New York Laser & Skin Care. She highlights some changes you might notice.

Block Party's Over Sunscreens can no longer be labeled "sunblock" because the FDA says the claim is false. "Sunblock implies the product 'blocks' 100% of the sun's rays, which is untrue," Kauvar says. "Sunscreens will absorb, scatter, or reflect varying amounts of UVB and UVA, depending on their composition."

High and Mighty Only a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher can be labeled to say things like "reduces skin cancer risk" and "protects

against early skin aging." **Broad Way** Sunscreens must protect equally against UVB (burning) and UVA (aging) rays to be labeled "broad spectrum." **H₂O No** Sunscreens can no longer be labeled "waterproof" or "sweatproof." "Sunscreens will either have no water-resistance label or will be labeled resistant for 40 or 80 minutes," says Kauvar. Because moisturizers with SPF rub off easily, especially if you're sweating, most won't be water-resistant.

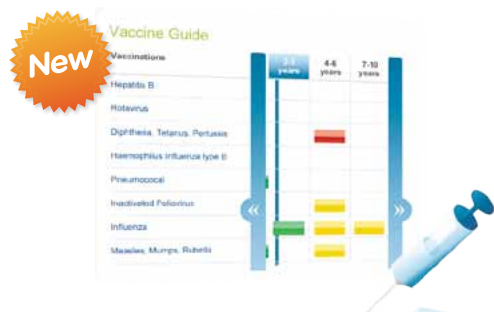
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parenting matters

EXPERT ADVICE FOR KIDS' SAKE



By Hansa Bhargava, MD
WebMD MEDICAL EDITOR



Sweet Rewards?

Praising kids with food can send the wrong health message. Here's why

Have you ever been tempted to use food to reward your children? I can tell you honestly I have, even though I'm a pediatrician. Sometimes when my 6-year-old twins refuse to eat their vegetables, the words almost fall out of my mouth: "You'll get dessert if you finish."

So what's the big deal? Here's what tends to happen:

You offer sugar but little or no nutrition. Reward foods aren't broccoli or carrots. They're usually cookies, candy, or similar treats high in sugar and empty

You enable emotional eating. Food given as a reward can lead to an unhealthy emotional connection between eating certain foods and feeling good. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, kids may use food to avoid feelings or situations that are difficult for them to handle. Eating because they're bored or stressed can cause children to feel guilty or remorseful.

You encourage a desire for sweets and poor eating habits. Giving

children food for good behavior teaches them to eat whether or not they are actually hungry, the Connecticut State Department of Education reports. And, by rewarding kids with sweets, you're sending the message that these are more valuable than other foods.

You sabotage your best intentions. If you reward your child with a cupcake, he'll be less keen to eat his peas, not more.

BY
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FOODS.



calories. For everyone, but especially growing children, too much sugar and too many low-nutrient foods can lead to health problems, including weight gain, cavities, and a higher risk of type 2 diabetes. According to the CDC, a third of children between ages 2 and 19 are overweight or obese and may face adult health problems such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

"It's like teaching children a lesson on the importance of not smoking and then handing out ashtrays and lighters to the kids who did the best job listening," says Marlene Schwartz, PhD, of the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity.

Next time, for good behavior, say, "Let's go to the park since you did a good job!"

ROAD MAP

Point your kids in the right direction with these healthy eating strategies.

What's cooking? Get your kids involved in grocery shopping and

preparing meals. Encourage them to try different foods.



Involve the family. Establish

healthy behaviors for the entire family so children know they are not alone in their goal to be healthier.

Switch it off. Turn off the TV and mobile devices at the table so family members can share what's going on in their lives.

Master moods. Help your child learn that food can't solve problems. Teach him how to deal with his feelings instead.

Get moving. Children need 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Help your children set up an obstacle course. Take a walk or ride bikes together.

Sleep well. Make sure your children get the sleep they need each night. They will be better learners in school and have more energy to run, ride bikes, and play.



It can take **eight to nine times** trying a new food before a child learns to like it.

Challenge your children to become **fit kids**.

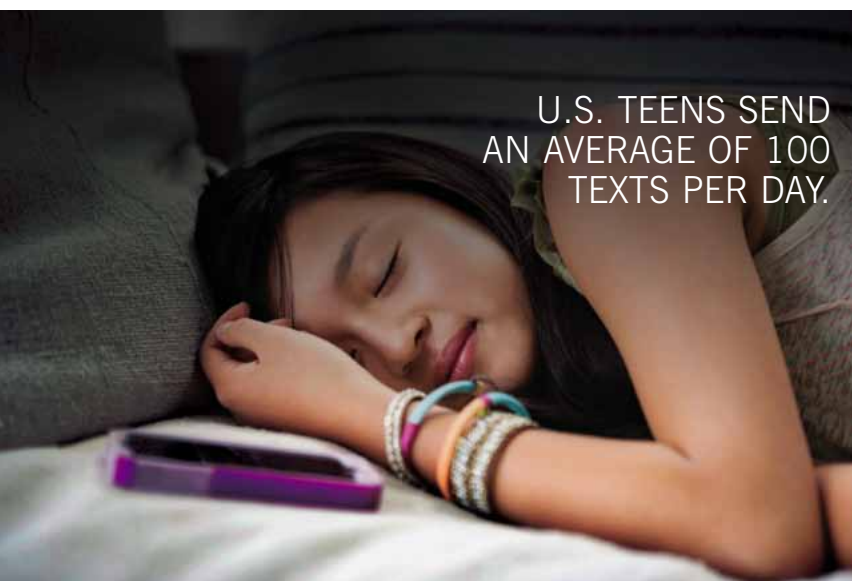


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Night Moves

First there was sleep-eating, and now there's sleep-texting? That's right—and your teens are probably doing it



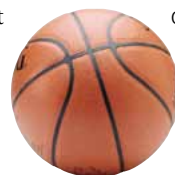
their lifestyles—increased academic and social pressure, late nights, and sleep-in Saturday mornings—also make it harder for them to maintain regular sleep schedules.

Unhealthy sleep habits can lead to serious sleep deprivation, posing a threat to teens' academic success and also to their physical and mental health. Sleep problems among this age group are linked to obesity, high blood pressure, depression, behavioral problems, and drug abuse.

Some evidence suggests that sleep problems during adolescence can affect health well

into adulthood. Research already shows that social media can interfere with teens' sleep habits. Teens spend 53 hours per week engaged with some form of electronic media, according to a large-scale study by the Kaiser Family Foundation. That's more than seven hours per day. The study also found that teens' daily consumption of social media is on the rise, with their use of mobile media increasing at the fastest rate. Another study indicates that teens who text and use the Internet are more likely to have trouble getting to sleep and staying asleep.

Let's not forget that texting during sleep is disruptive not only to the texting teen, but also to the teen who receives a message—a beeping cellphone in the middle of the night is not exactly restful.



TECH DETOX

Here's how parents can help keep teenagers from overusing technology:

Set limits. Self-discipline and time management are hard enough for adults, much less teenagers, but you can establish boundaries. The Kaiser Family Foundation reports that only three in 10 teens have rules at home about electronic media use. It also says that such rules do help decrease teens' overall tech time.

Get them outside. Whether it's organized sports or regular family hikes, physical activity has many benefits, including time away from

online distractions. Regular exercise and exposure to sunlight also help improve sleep quality.

Keep the bedroom tech-free. This one's a no-brainer. The easiest way to prevent technology from interfering with your teenager's sleep is to keep cellphones, computers, and other electronic devices out of the bedroom.

Here's a decidedly

21st-century sleep issue: "Sleep-texting" is apparently a growing phenomenon among teens. That's right: Teens are reaching for their phones during the night, firing off messages, and waking up with no recollection of their actions.

Social media and technology are part of daily life for everyone today, but especially for young people. One study suggests that U.S. teens send an average of 100 texts per day! If that activity extends to their sleep time, we've got a serious health issue on our hands.

Even without sleep-texting, teens have their own particular set of shut-eye needs and challenges. For one, teens generally need at least nine hours of sleep per night. Unfortunately, most don't get it. Biological changes associated with puberty make it harder for teens to fall asleep and stay asleep. And



More than half of kids and teenagers who text or surf the Internet at bedtime have mood, behavior, and cognitive troubles during the day.

Catch up on other common sleep disorders in teens.



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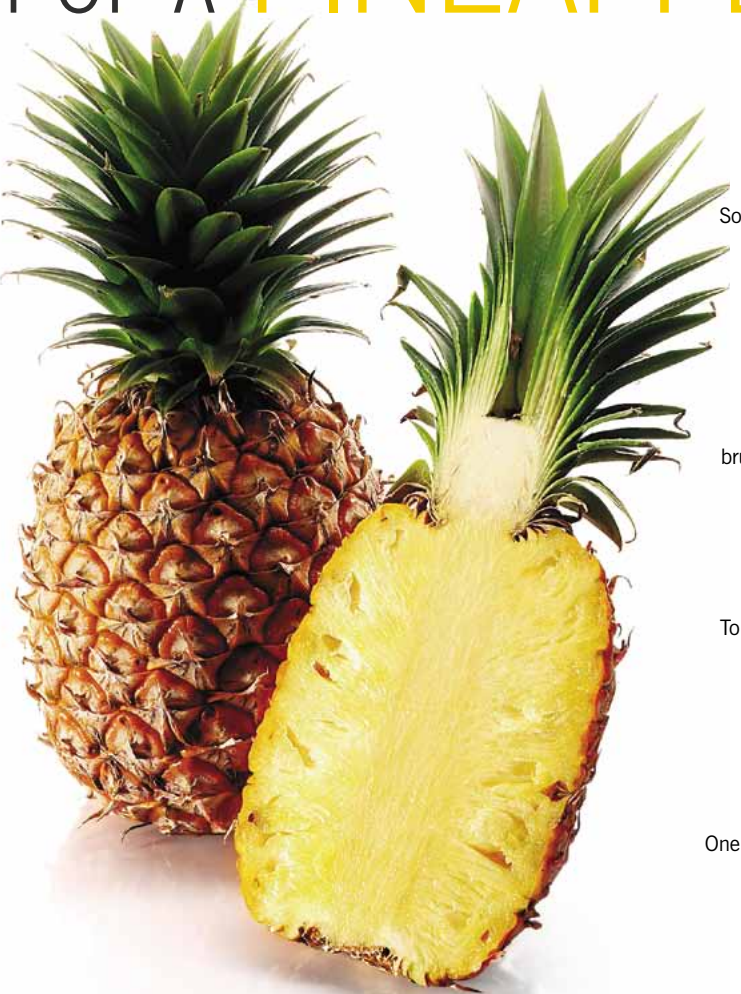
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PINEAPPLE



- National Treasure**
In 1493, explorer Christopher Columbus found pineapples on Guadeloupe Island in the Caribbean. The fruit is also native to southern Brazil and Paraguay.
- Precious Pick**
American colonists regarded pineapples as a luxurious treat because of their rarity and cost.
- Come Together**
A pineapple is the result of many flowers whose fruitlets have joined around the core.
- Golden Goodness**
Pineapples contain bromelain, an enzyme that may help arthritis pain by reducing inflammation. They are also a good source of vitamin C, which helps strengthen your immune system.

- Say Aloha**
Some of the largest pineapple crops are in Hawaii, which produces 500,000 tons of the fruit each year.
- Smell Test**
Pass over sour-smelling or bruised pineapples. Fruit from Hawaii or Central America tends to be freshest.
- Big Squeeze**
To make your pineapple softer and juicier, keep it at room temperature for one or two days before cutting.
- Good Cup**
One cup of pineapple has 70 to 85 calories.—*Ana Ferrer*

healthy recipe

Hawaiian Grilled Pineapple Shrimp Kebabs



Makes 4 servings	1 lb large shrimp, peeled (can substitute top-sirloin beef)	2 large sweet red peppers, cut into bite-sized pieces	12 pearl onions, fresh (or frozen) and peeled	1 8-oz package whole mushrooms, cleaned	2 cups fresh pineapple chunks (or canned in fruit juice, no sugar added)	vegetable cooking spray
Ingredients	3 cloves garlic, minced	1 tsp fresh (or bottled) minced ginger	1 tbsp cider or rice vinegar	1 tbsp low-sodium soy sauce	1 tsp five-spice powder (optional)	1 tsp dark sesame oil
	1 tsp honey	1/2 cup pineapple juice				
Directions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Combine first eight ingredients in zip-top plastic bag, then add shrimp. Marinate in refrigerator 30 minutes.Remove shrimp from marinade. Place marinade in a small saucepan, bring to a boil, and set aside for basting.Preheat grill to medium high. Spray with cooking spray. Thread vegetables, pineapple, and shrimp onto metal skewers. (If using wooden skewers, soak in water 30 minutes to prevent burning on the grill.)Place kebabs on grill, covered, over medium-high heat for 3 to 5 minutes per side until done, basting with reserved marinade.Drizzle remaining marinade over kebabs. Serve with brown rice.					
Per serving:	251 calories, 27 g protein, 29 g carbohydrate, 4 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 170 mg cholesterol, 4 g fiber, 19 g sugar, 311 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 13%					

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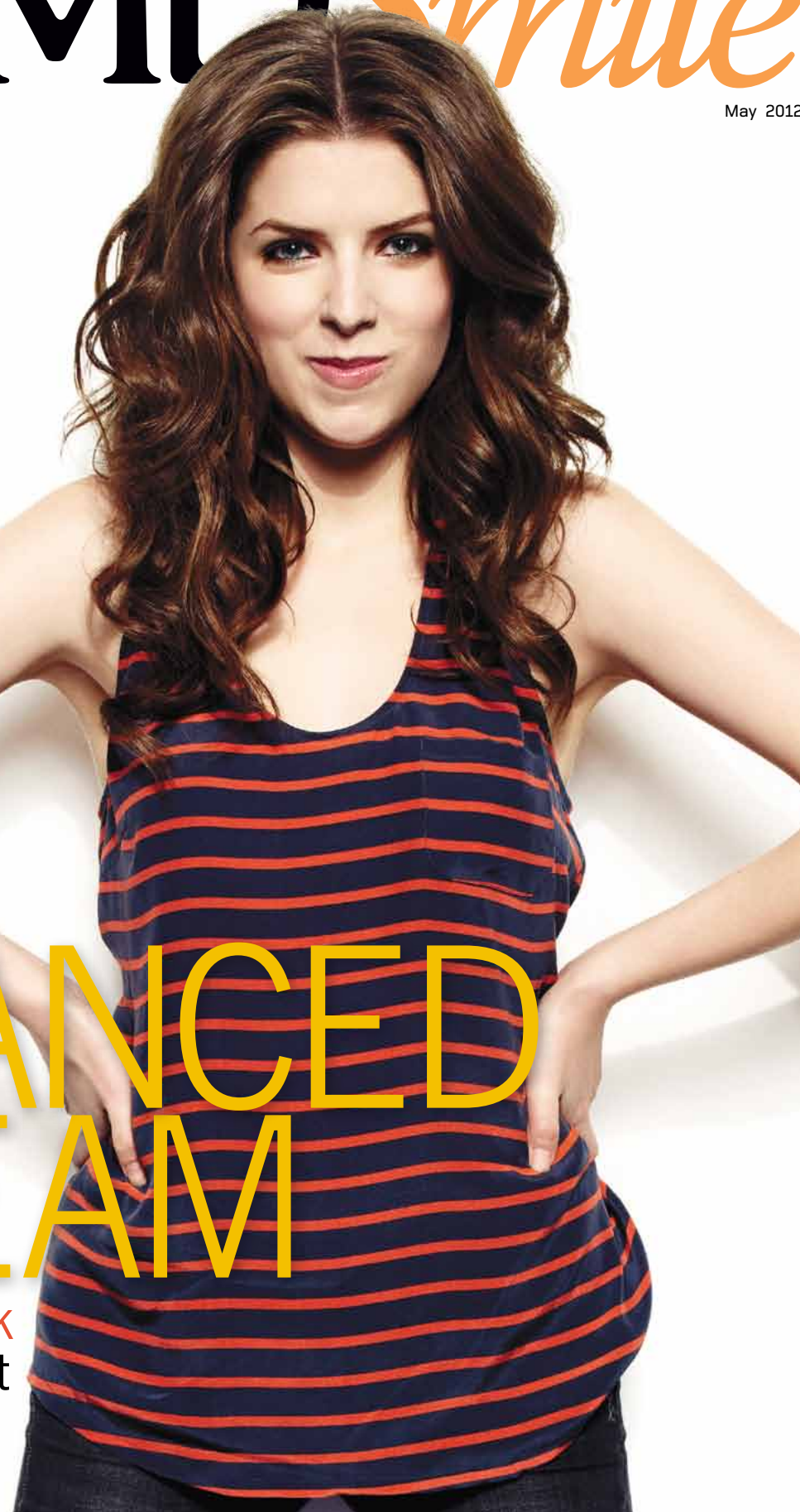
GREAT EIGHT
EXPERT TIPS
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SHAPE SHIFT
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MOUTHS OF BABES
WHAT'S THE RIGHT
AGE FOR A FIRST
DENTAL VISIT?

BALANCED BEAM

Actor **Anna Kendrick**
opens up about
finding success



Reviewed by
Eric Yabu, DDS
WebMD ORAL HEALTH EXPERT



The Great Eight

Keep your mouth in tiptop shape with our expert tips

By Heather Hatfield, WebMD Contributing Writer

Brushing, flossing, and rinsing are the ABCs of oral health, but they're only the beginning. A marvelous mouth takes more than squeezing paste out of a tube—think improving your toothbrushing technique, ditching the daily soda habit, and saying goodbye to cigarettes.

David Leader, DMD, an assistant clinical professor at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in Boston, outlines eight oral care musts for a healthy mouth.

1 Pay a visit. If you're prone to ditching the dentist, you're among the roughly 50% of adults in the United States who don't see a dentist yearly because of dental phobia, finances, or just plain neglect. But spend some quality time with your dentist (twice a year, the American Dental Association advises), and you'll catch problems such as decay, gum disease, trauma, or cancer at an early stage when they're treatable, not to mention more affordable to take care of.

2 Count the years. Toddlers and older adults tend to fly under the dental health radar, but they need mouth maintenance just like the rest of us. Children should see a dentist by the time they're 1, and until they are coordinated

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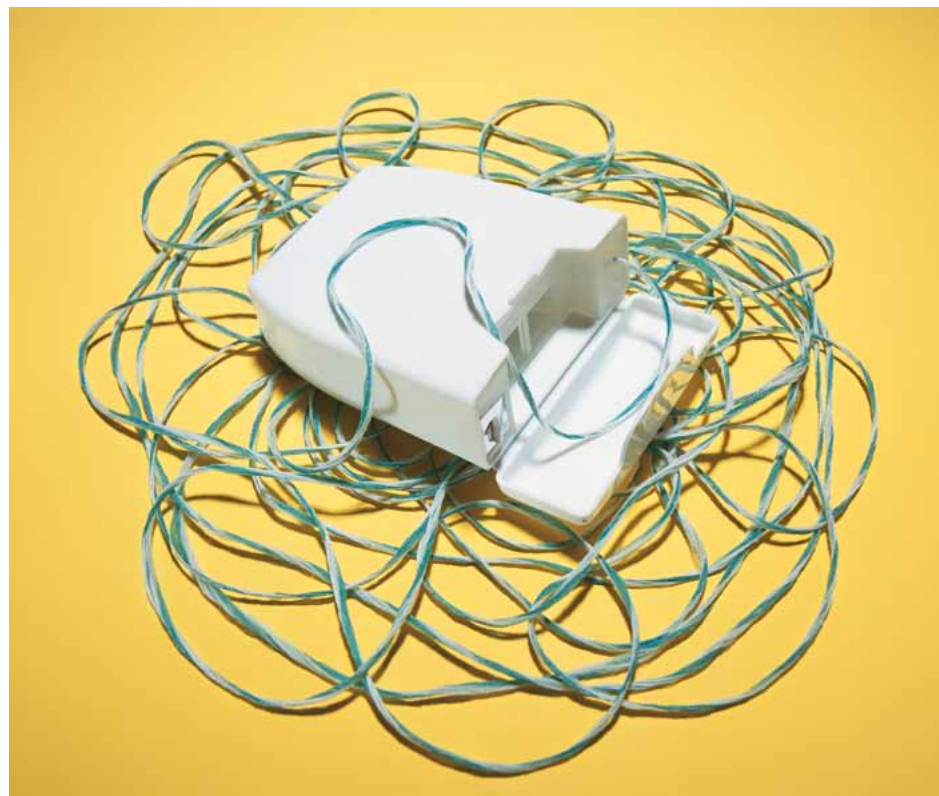
hair care

enough to tie their own shoes, they'll need help cleaning their teeth. Older folks have their own oral issues. Arthritis can make brushing and flossing challenging, and as people age, the amount of saliva they produce decreases, which means more tooth decay and also discomfort for those who wear dentures.

3 Can the soda. Fizzy is fun but also part of the reason soda is so bad for your teeth. Two ingredients—phosphoric acid and citric acid—give soda its “bite” but also eat away at the surface of your teeth. While the occasional soda won't hurt, a can or more a day makes your tooth enamel softer and more susceptible to cavities. Switch to water instead, adding flavor with sliced citrus or crushed berries or mint leaves.

4 Don't sugarcoat it. Sugar is a major culprit in tooth decay. It fuels bacteria and acidity in your mouth, causing plaque to form and eat away at your enamel and gums. Your pearly whites are hit with up to 20 minutes of acid production for every sugar fest you indulge in, from sweetened coffee in the morning to ice cream at night. To avoid being among the 20% of people in the United States who face tooth decay every time they look in the mirror, try to cut down on sugary treats, and aim to brush and floss after every meal or snack.

5 Pack it in. You've heard it before: Quit smoking. But this time, it's your dentist talking. The nicotine and tar in cigarettes not only turn your



Avoid being among the 20% of people who face tooth decay: Cut down on sugary treats, and aim to brush and floss after every meal.

teeth an unsightly shade of yellow, they eat away at your gums. Smoking creates a ripe environment for bacteria and plaque on your teeth and along the gum line. That harms tissue, degrades the bone that supports teeth, and, eventually, increases your risk of tooth loss. Even worse, tobacco chemicals can lead to oral cancer.

6 Use the right toothbrush. You want a brush with soft bristles. With the right technique, it should last two to three months. It's ready to be replaced when you notice bent bristles, but don't wait that long. Even a straight bristle tip can become blunted instead of rounded and cause injury to the teeth and gums.

7 Practice proper technique. While you probably know you should brush your teeth at least twice a day,

if you're like most people, you don't give much thought to how to do it. Hold the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle, pointed toward the gum line, and use gentle, short, circular motions. Brush each tooth 10 to 15 times, but don't overdo it. Overly aggressive brushing can damage teeth and erode your gum line.

8 Finesse flossing. It's simple: Flossing fosters healthier teeth and gums. But like brushing, there's a right and wrong way because flaws in your flossing can cause friction and damage the gum line. Wrap about a foot of floss around your index fingers, keeping about two inches between your fingers to work with. Unroll a fresh section of floss for each tooth, and keep the floss tight against the tooth to break up plaque while leaving your gums in good shape. ■

NICHOLAS EVELEGGETT IMAGES

Tiny Teeth

What's the right age for a visit to the dentist?

Q ▶ How old should my child be before I make his first dental appointment?

A ▶ You should take him in by the time he celebrates his first birthday.

First visits are mostly about getting kids used to the dentist's chair and educating parents about how to care for baby's teeth. If your child has transitioned from the bottle to cup and doesn't snack or drink in

the middle of the night, you get a one-year pass, until age 2. That's when the standard every-six-month dental visit recommendation kicks into gear. When your

child is between ages 4 and 6, expect your dentist to take a first set of X-rays to check for cavities lurking between the teeth.

Prevention is the name of the game between ages 6 and 12, when baby teeth give way to permanent teeth. Your child's dentist will probably suggest a sealant, a plastic resin that bonds to teeth's chewing surfaces, between ages 7 and 9. Cavity-prone molars are the most likely site for treatment. The resin keeps cavity-causing bacteria from getting into the grooves and valleys of teeth.

Also when your child is around age 7, his dentist will likely suggest an orthodontic evaluation. Most kids will wait until their early teens for braces, but orthodontics is about modifying jaw growth, so identifying skeletal causes of crooked teeth early helps ensure a beautiful smile later on.

In the end, it's the basics—brushing twice a day, flossing daily, and getting regular dental checkups—that have the most impact on a kid's smile.



CHARLES GULLING/GETTY IMAGES



Eric Yabu, DDS
WebMD ORAL HEALTH EXPERT

Can I change the shape of my teeth?

Yes. You can choose from among several dental procedures.

Dental bonding is a procedure in which your dentist applies a tooth-colored resin to the tooth surface, which hardens with a special light that bonds the material to the tooth. Bonding can fill gaps between teeth, repair small chips, and smooth out rough edges.

Dental crowns are tooth-shaped “caps” placed over teeth. Cemented into place, crowns encase the entire visible portion of a tooth. Crowns are made of porcelain or porcelain fused to metal and restore the tooth's natural shape, contour, and appearance.

Veneers are wafer-thin, custom-made shells of tooth-colored materials, either porcelain or resin that are bonded to the front surface of teeth.

Recontouring or reshaping removes small amounts of tooth enamel to change a tooth's length, shape, or surface.

These options differ in terms of cost, durability, and “chair time.” Talk to your dentist to see what's right for you.



Gwen Cohen Brown, DDS, FAAOMP
WebMD ORAL HEALTH EXPERT

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BALANCED BEAM

Actor **Anna Kendrick**
used to have a
hard time smiling,
but now she finds
it hard not to

By Lauren Paige Kennedy, WebMD Contributing Writer

Anna Kendrick is quick to grin—in fact, her winsome smile just might be her signature feature. Yet just a few years ago, when she first became a household name after a knockout, Academy Award-nominated performance in *Up in the Air* opposite George Clooney, her beam was a bit of an act.

“I try so hard to keep smiling, and to deal with everything publicly,” she told talk show host Ellen DeGeneres in early 2010, right as her career was hitting hyper-drive. “But my poor friends and family are dealing with my meltdowns on a daily basis.” Kendrick says she felt overwhelmed by the media attention and the transition from life as a working actor who’d labored for years on Broadway and in smaller parts to bona fide celebrity.

“It feels funny to complain about that end of it,” she says now. “So I won’t do that. But it does put you in a very vulnerable place.”

Two years later, after critical praise for her work in Seth Rogen’s 2011 cancer dramedy *50/50* and with the much-buzzed-about *What to Expect When You’re Expecting* due for delivery in May, Kendrick says her inner and outer selves have finally aligned. But that’s not because the media juggernaut has become any easier.

“I enjoy being on set—much more than getting caught up in the promotional end,”

she says. “I am a lot more comfortable in my skin now, mostly because I did six films last year, and I spent more of my time doing the actual work, which is what I really enjoy.”

Kendrick, 26, always wanted to be an actor, even as a preteen growing up in Portland, Maine. Her parents helped make that happen, packing Kendrick and her older brother onto a Greyhound bus to New York City so they could audition for—and win—coveted roles. (Her first acting gig was at 12, playing Dinah in the Broadway musical *High Society*.) “We had to promise up and down we’d go straight to the audition” and then turn around and come straight home, she laughs.

She’s doing less auditioning nowadays as acting roles continue to roll in. In *What to Expect*—a film co-starring Jennifer Lopez, Cameron Diaz, Elizabeth Banks, and Chris Rock—Kendrick plays a gourmet food truck vendor who hooks up with a fellow rising chef, played by *Gossip Girl*’s Chace Crawford.

After the “meet cute,” the fledgling duo find themselves, to their great shock, pregnant.

How did Kendrick prepare? “I did some research with a chef,” she says, “and cut my fingers so many times in the process! But I felt weird about going up to random women and asking if they’d ever had an unexpected pregnancy, and what that felt like. For part of the shoot I did wear a pregnancy prosthetic, and I was most surprised about how many people came up and just started poking at my stomach. They’d just poke it! And so many women on the set would see me [wearing] it and immediately start telling me about their own experiences being pregnant. There was something about the stomach itself that made women want to talk.”

Kendrick says she’s “nowhere close to being enough of a grown-up” to consider motherhood, although she’s not ruling it out down the line. She’s glad she’s been able to first pursue her dream. In fact, Kendrick’s mother paved the way by setting a good example.

“I grew up with a working mom,” Kendrick says. “So that was always normal to me. But I remember one time a neighbor who was a stay-at-home mom came over and criticized my mother for making one big batch of pancakes and then freezing what was left so we could take them out and eat them all week. And my dad overheard her, and he just let her have it! Why do moms do that to each other? Because you know what? We loved those pancakes! We did.” ■



3 THINGS THAT MAKE ANNA SMILE

- 1 “Seeing people’s home renovations in *Dwell* magazine. What they’ve done to their homes, I always think it’s so sweet—and cooler than anything I can manage.”
- 2 “Dog-sitting! I don’t have one yet, so I will dog-sit for basically anybody.”
- 3 “My mom makes jewelry, and sometimes she sends me something in the mail out of nowhere.”

What makes you smile? Share it in our [communities](#).



WebMD.com



Motherhood is center stage for Uma Thurman. The actor, with two kids and another on the way, is helping new moms give their babies a healthy start

SMASH

HIT

Uma Thurman doesn't believe in balance. You know, that balance we're told holds the key to a happy, healthy life. That perfect equilibrium, where we make enough time for our kids, our spouses, our careers, our homes, our friends, and, oh yes, ourselves. Balance is supposed to be the kinder, gentler alternative to "having it all," but Thurman doesn't buy it.

"The idea of balance itself is kind of an assault on reason," says Thurman, 42, best known for playing the vengeful, blood-spattered Bride in the Kill Bill films and the slinky gangster's wife in Pulp Fiction. Now she's in her first significant TV role as a famous scene-stealing actor who tries her hand at musical theater in the buzziest show of the season, NBC's *Smash*. "Both your family and your career require full-time commitments to really do well," she says. "It's somewhat impossible to give all your attention to two things or four things."

By Gina Shaw, WebMD Contributing Writer

Reviewed by
Louise Chang, MD
WebMD SENIOR MEDICAL EDITOR





Thurman on the set of NBC's *Smash* with co-stars Christian Borle, left, and Jack Davenport, right.

So what do you do? “You have to pick one [commitment] that you know you can’t live with yourself if you screw up,” Thurman says. “I couldn’t live with myself if I screwed up my kids.”

Growth Potential

That’s why Thurman took a four-year hiatus in the late 1990s, doing only a few small, low-budget projects after giving birth to daughter Maya, who is 14 this July. Son Levon, now 10, was born the year before *Kill Bill* hit the multiplexes. Fortunately for Thurman, director Quentin Tarantino had written the part of The Bride for her and refused to recast the role, delaying production for months while she was pregnant.

“I probably very much shortchanged my career when I did that, but it was worth it,” she says. “Still, it’s not easy. I have a wonderful relationship with my children, and they’re the most important thing to me, but one does wish to have a creative,



I love song and dance and Broadway, and I thought it was an exciting, creative idea for a show.



independent life as a person, too. It’s hard to be a self-sufficient provider and parent and have a foot in both worlds.”

Another break in the action may be coming soon—Thurman revealed in February that she is pregnant with her third child, a girl, due in late summer. Dad is her boyfriend, financier Arpad “Arki” Busson, who also has two children from a previous marriage.

Thurman understands, on a very personal level, that she has it far easier than

most working moms. Back when she was pregnant with Maya, she encountered a neighbor who forever shaped her perception of just how difficult parenting can be.

Living in a small brownstone in Manhattan with actor and then-husband Ethan Hawke, Thurman happily dragged home the usual array of baby gear that expectant parents stock up on: stroller, car seat, crib, swing. She saw her upstairs neighbor doing the same thing.

“She kept coming into the building lugging giant bags of baby goods up and down the stairs, just huge bags. She was a very slender and slim person, and at that point I was not!” Thurman says, laughing. “I finally said, ‘I know what I’m doing with all these bags of baby things, but what are you doing?’”

The neighbor was Julie Burns, a social worker (and wife of documentary producer Ken Burns), who had spent years working as a psychotherapist with older children with behavioral problems as well as troubles with depression, drug and alcohol abuse, and violence. She was hauling all those supplies for her new charity,

Room to Grow, which helps expectant moms living in poverty.

Burns had decided she needed to intervene earlier in children’s lives. “There was a profound lack of services for children in poverty from birth to age 3,” she says. “These families want the very best for their children, just like parents with more resources do. I wanted to create an organization that would provide for their material needs, but also help parents navigate all the emotional and practical challenges that come with raising a young child, while at the same time facing all of the obstacles that poverty injects into your life.”

That hit home with Thurman. “It’s undebatably unjust for children to suffer,” she says. “Going through the process of becoming a parent, naturally you see very closely how frightening, how overwhelming, and how important it is to you, and how much you want the best for your child. It brought it so close to home to imagine what it would be like to face all those things without a job, without resources, without support.”

From that late-pregnancy encounter in an apartment hallway came a 14-year partnership. Thurman became one of the founding board members of Room to Grow (roomtogrow.org), which now

THE TYRANNY OF BALANCE

Is busy actor, mom, and volunteer Uma Thurman right? Are we torturing ourselves with this mythical idea of a “balanced” life? Definitely, says Lana Holstein, MD, a life coach and the former director of women’s health at Canyon Ranch in Tucson, Ariz. “As a physician, mother, wife, and life coach, I have never lived a life of balance,” she says. “Most of our lives are not in balance. We emphasize one area or another for a time—that is just fine in my book.” So what should we strive for instead?

Nourishment, says Holstein. “We all need nourishment every day—and not just food. Are you including things that nourish your life essence? Pay attention to your exhaustion/joy ratio. If you are nourishing your true self consistently, you should not be exhausted and chronically vigilant.”

Movement, advises time-management consultant Steve McClatchy, founder of Alleer Training & Consulting, in Malvern, Pa. “Think of the last time you had the thought that

your life is better today than it was yesterday. Maybe it was a graduation, a new job offer, an award your child received, even just doing a great workout or receiving a compliment on a job well done. Movement in our lives toward goals and improvement creates the excitement and adrenaline that we need to keep going.”

Realism, says Sara Rosenquist, PhD, a clinical psychologist in private practice and former clinical assistant professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. “As long as people have to work for a living, children will come second to making money to pay the rent and put food on the table. Lose the guilt. Adjust the expectations. Then you will have ‘balance,’ the way a mobile is balanced with some parts short and heavy and other parts long and light, but it will not be a 50-50 division of time.”

Blending, says Leigh Steere, co-founder of Managing People Better, a management research firm in Boulder, Colo. “Balancing makes you think of juggling balls, with fear of one dropping,” she says. “Blending brings up the idea of mixing ingredients to make a wonderful dessert or blending colors to create a vibrant painting. It also incorporates the notion that you can change the blend as desired.”—GS



Thurman with her boyfriend, financier Arpad “Arki” Busson.



Thurman with her daughter, Maya.

serves hundreds of families in New York City and Boston. Expectant parents are referred to the organization by prenatal programs for low-income families. They're given all the supplies they need for their new arrivals from among thousands of new and gently used baby and toddler items donated by area families. But the material side of parenting is only part of the organization's efforts.

"You can't just drop in and get stuff and go," says Burns. From pregnancy through toddlerhood, families meet one-on-one with Room to Grow staff

clinicians, who monitor the baby's growth, teach families parenting skills, and help them navigate problems like finding affordable housing, looking for a new job, and getting a GED.

"It's about helping people become successful parents," says Thurman, who doesn't just slap her name on charitable solicitations. She devotes days to board meetings and planning retreats for Room to Grow, plunging into balance sheets and tackling challenging decisions about how to expand the charity's reach. "How do parents access subsidized child care

Having the kinds of things that parents know their children need to grow and develop is in itself a really strong approach to reducing stress in the family.



A mother and her twins learn by playing at Room to Grow with social worker Rebecca Freedman, left.



Thurman with Julie Burns, founder of Room to Grow, and her husband, documentary producer Ken Burns.

so they can work? How can they afford dental care for their child? Whatever the issue is, from the medical to the personal, Room to Grow is there for people who might otherwise be overwhelmed."

The Room to Grow setup is an ideal strategy for nurturing learning in kids and parents facing poverty, says Sheila Smith, PhD, director of early childhood at the National Center for Children in Poverty at the Mailman School of Public Health, part of Columbia University. "Parents experience a lot of pressure when they can't provide material items for children. Just having the kinds of things that parents know their children need to grow and develop is, in itself, a really strong approach to reducing stress in the family. It also helps parents who are struggling with economic hardships to build that bond with their children, to enjoy time together that's not just the daily chore of getting through the day and making sure there's food on the table."

Thurman is so devoted to Room to Grow that she wedged a host of commitments to its winter fundraising event (she served as co-chair along with

the Burnses and fellow actors Liv Tyler, Julianna Margulies, and Mark Ruffalo and his wife, Sunrise) into her schedule in February, even though she was almost constantly filming for *Smash*.

Stress S.O.S.

Thurman has a full plate for sure. But appearing in a show about staging a Broadway musical was hard to resist. "It's the first time I've done something like this, and I thought it would be fun," she says of her part in the series, which also stars Debra Messing, Megan Hilty, and Katharine McPhee. "I love song and dance and Broadway, and I thought it was an exciting, creative idea for a show."

She also stars in the upcoming release *Bel Ami*, a period piece she shares with Robert Pattinson and Christina Ricci. She has half a dozen other movies in pre- or post-production, including *The Savages* in July, and rumors have it that a *Kill Bill 3* may start filming soon.

You might expect Thurman to handle her stressful schedule with Zen aplomb. Her father, Robert Thurman, is a noted Buddhist theologian and the first Westerner ordained as a Tibetan Buddhist monk. But despite many reports listing her among famous Buddhists, Thurman says she admires the philosophy but doesn't practice it.

She freely admits that she handles stress "pretty badly!" But she's trying a



Room to Grow provides toys to moms and kids.

new approach. "I was working the other day, and I said to someone, 'I'm sorry that you're stressed,' and the person said very calmly, 'I'm not stressed, I'm concerned.' I've decided to do that. I walk around all the time saying, 'I'm stressed, I'm stressed,

I'm stressed,' but now I'm going to start saying that 'I'm concerned.' Maybe that will help."

Her favorite way to ease the pressure? Getting back to Mother Nature. "Whenever I can, I get out of the urban environment as much as possible. My favorite spot is the mountains. But even if I'm in the city, I have Central Park."

Another can't-live-without way to take care of herself: reading. Thurman also admits to having a few vices, including food indulgences (guilty pleasure: chocolate), not getting enough sleep, and neglecting exercise. "I don't do it enough. Guilty!"

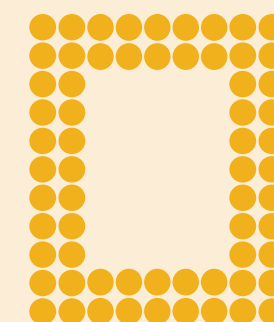
And she says her work with Room to Grow is itself a stress-reliever. "I think

it's important to feel you have a positive outlet, to know that you're making some sort of difference and connecting with your community and that things can be improved," she says. "It's a big relief—instead of watching the news and thinking the sky is going to fall."

Despite her busy schedule, Thurman still hasn't been pushing herself quite as hard as she did before she had kids.

"I've done things that I've chosen. Just to enjoy myself. I haven't done anything really big in a long time. Partly that's been a conscious choice, and partly it's been that I just haven't found something worth putting my life aside to do." Spoken like a true believer in making choices instead of trying to have it all. ■

THE POWER OF PLAY



ne of the strengths of Room to Grow, to which actor Uma Thurman has devoted time and energy for 14 years, is the program's ability to help parents and children play productively together.

"Children develop their ability to learn through exploration with toys," says early childhood education and development expert Sheila Smith, PhD. "They also develop it in play with adults who help them and say, 'Why don't you try it this way?' but also sit back and let

them try things on their own. Room to Grow increases the opportunities for parents to motivate their child to learn."

You don't need fancy, expensive gear to do that, Smith says. The simplest toys are often the best. Try Smith's top three playthings:

Stuffed animals or small family figures "Anything that represents a character," she says, the more general, the better. Don't tie children down to brand-name princess dolls or action heroes. "They can make up stories and use their imagination, which encourages symbolic thinking and language development."

Art supplies and Play-Doh "You can talk about all kinds of wonderful things and use great vocabulary with Play-Doh and paint," Smith says. "Make a pattern with a brush or your finger. Make shapes. Talk about stretching, dripping, blending, and colors."

Blocks "Blocks are the ultimate open-ended play material. They're wonderful because children can make anything and then remake it," Smith explains. "They're very good for spatial reasoning, and they also encourage flexible thinking. Children try an idea, and if it doesn't look the way they want, they can try something else."—GS



ALLERGIES

QUIZ

IS YOUR HOME ALLERGY-PROOF?

Whether you're allergic to pollen, dust mites, mold spores, or a combination of these things, you can take steps to reduce your exposure to allergens at home. **"Showering before you get in bed and washing your bedding in hot water is helpful,"** sgb188 tells another member of the WebMD allergies community. **"Since you do have dust allergies, have you put allergy-proof covers on your mattress, box springs, and pillows?"** Those are all good tips. Do you know other ways to allergy-proof your home?

- 1 Do you shut windows and run the air conditioner when pollen counts are high?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- 2 Do you use a dehumidifier in humid areas?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- 3 Have you removed wall-to-wall carpeting in your home?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- 4 Do you have washable curtains or drapes?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- 5 Do you get help with yard work?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Answers: 1. Use air conditioning and keep windows closed during allergy season to keep pollen out and reduce allergy symptoms. 2. Run a dehumidifier in high-humidity areas, such as basements and bathrooms, to deter mold growth. 3. Hardwood floors (and washable area rugs) are easier to clean than wall-to-wall carpets. 4. You're more likely to wash dust-catching curtains and drapes regularly if you can throw them in the washing machine than if they have to be dry cleaned. 5. If grass pollen is your trigger, hire someone to mow the lawn to minimize your exposure.

Source: [WebMD Allergies Health Center](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

Besides bedding, **dust mites** also thrive in plush animals and overstuffed furniture, and on window blinds.



QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR

- 1 Should I be tested to find out what's causing my allergies?
- 2 What steps can I take to reduce my exposure to allergens?
- 3 Should I take allergy medicines? Do I need a prescription or can I use the over-the-counter kind?
- 4 What about allergy shots—how do they work? How often might I need to get them?

ALLERGIES NEWSLETTER

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MIND

QUIZ

IS IT MORE THAN THE BABY BLUES?

Most pregnant women know they may get the “baby blues” when their hormone levels shift a few days after giving birth. But some, like **sbx123**, who posts to the WebMD depression community, also worry they'll get postpartum depression (PPD). **"I am a 25-year-old female who has a past with depression starting when I was about 12,"** she writes. **"I have managed pretty well for 2.5 years without medication. I was wondering if anyone knew if there is any link between having a history of depression and then having postpartum depression?"** It's a good question. Take this quiz to learn more about PPD risk factors.

- 1 Have you ever had depression unrelated to a pregnancy?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- 2 Do you have a family history of depression?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- 3 Did something stressful happen during your pregnancy, such as a death of a friend or relative? Or are you facing stresses now, such as relationship or financial problems?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- 4 Have you felt sad, anxious, or worthless for more than two weeks?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Answers: 1. Up to 30% of women who have been diagnosed with major depression unrelated to pregnancy develop postpartum depression. 2. Women with blood relatives who've had depression are more likely to get postpartum depression. Having a relative who had PPD elevates the risk further. 3. Dealing with difficult events during or after your pregnancy can raise your risk of PPD. 4. As your hormones shift after giving birth, it's normal to feel the baby blues. But that shouldn't last more than a week or two. If your symptoms persist—or you feel they're getting worse—talk to your doctor.

Source: NIH, American Academy of Family Physicians, and the [WebMD Depression Health Center](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

If you've already had one episode of postpartum depression, you face a **50% chance** of getting it with later pregnancies.



QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR

- 1 How do I know if I am at risk for postpartum depression (PPD)?
- 2 If I develop PPD, what treatments—medication, counseling, or support groups—can help me?
- 3 What can my partner or family members do to help me?
- 4 What are the warning signs that I need immediate medical help?

MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER

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Vanessa Williams

ACTOR/AUTHOR

How did your mom influence your health habits?

She was always extremely active. When I was growing up, if she wasn't taking the dog for a walk, she'd be in town doing an exercise class. We would ice-skate together as a family.

Did she teach you things that you've passed down to your kids?

We always had fresh produce because of my parents' love for gardening. I used to bring my kids over to their house every year to pick pumpkins, so my kids learned to appreciate fresh vegetables.

Do you have a personal health philosophy?

I listen to my body. I don't weigh myself. I'm not obsessed with pounds—if I feel good in my clothes, I feel good. If my clothes start to get tight, I know I've got to modify what I'm eating.

What are your best and worst health habits?

The worst would be that I'm a baker. That's my kryptonite. My best is that I like to do something every day, even if it's just getting on the treadmill for an hour and watching the news. I'll take a brisk walk, or take a Pilates or yoga class.

What's your eating style?

I enjoy food. I enjoy good wine. I enjoy good, hot, fresh bread if I'm in France, with a nice slab of ridiculously delicious butter. So, especially when I travel, I always try to eat what's local and what's good. I try not to overindulge, and if I do, I have enough discipline to get back on the routine to better health.

In your memoir, you talk about times when you should have said "no" and didn't. What did you learn from that experience?

I think we all have an internal gauge that warns us about certain situations in life. And it's up to us to listen and tune in to it, but also to act upon it. Listen to that voice, because it's there to protect you.

Is what you do for a living important to your health?

I think being able to express yourself is the most important thing anyone can do in life, so I'm lucky to be able to do what I love. I think a lot of people have passions and when those are stifled, that's when depression sets in. Doing what you love—whether it's numbers or hotel management—is important to feed your soul.

Is there one health habit you wish you'd started earlier in your life?

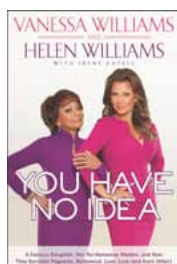
Sunscreen. I grew up in the '70s, so it was baby oil and reflectors. Sunscreen would have done me well in my teen years and early 20s. I probably wouldn't have the majority of the wrinkles I have now if I had paid attention to that. —Linda Formicelli

You've been in ABC's *Desperate Housewives*, which is ending this month, and *Ugly Betty* before that, as well as a singer, dancer, and model. How do you find time to take care of yourself and stay fit?

I make the time. I've got one child in school, so I gear my life around her schedule. You have to be really organized. I've been a mother for 24 years, and before that I went from college to working, so it's hard for me not to have a schedule.

You and your mother wrote *You Have No Idea: A Famous Daughter, Her No-Nonsense Mother, and How They Survived Pageants, Hollywood, Love, Loss (and Each Other)*. How did you decide to tell your story with your mom?

The older I get, the more I realize how important my parents were in terms of not only creating me but giving me the skills to cope in life. People ask, "How are you so grounded?" It always comes back to being brought up by two parents who were loving and supportive, but also terrific in terms of setting boundaries. Writing a book with my mom allowed me to reflect on what made me me.



Read **Vanessa Williams'** full interview.



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