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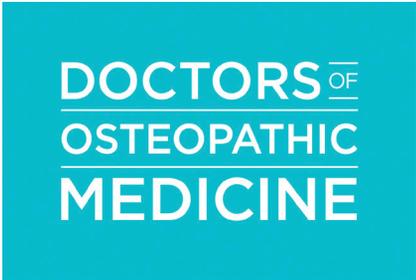
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A passion for healthy food that's good



Whether you're a kitchen pro or just enjoy a good meal, you can't avoid the explosion of food videos across your social feeds. It's hard not to get lost in them. I imagine myself making a dish, eating it, then going to the gym to burn it all off all without ever leaving my chair—which is probably not the best idea!

In this issue, celebrity chef and restaurateur Curtis Stone shares his passion for food. And as the dad of two young boys, he has practical tips for cultivating healthy meals in kids—and dealing with picky eating along the way.

Wondering what to cook for dinner tonight? Our food section is full of fresh ideas, including some delicious ways to prepare heart-healthy salmon. The burgers look so good I'm going to go beyond visualizing and actually make them!

Here's to good food and good health.

Kristy

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FACTS & STATS

Food, Glorious Food

Shopping, prepping, cooking, consuming—food plays a huge role in your daily life. Make the most of meals for yourself and your family

→ **Veg Out**
Eat more veggies to keep calories down and nutrition up.



2,544

Number of calories the average American consumes per day—that's up from 2,039 calories in 1970

12%

Amount of calories you'll save by chewing each bite of food 40 times

200

Number of calories you save by cooking at home instead of eating at a restaurant

41%

Percentage of North Americans who ate snacks instead of dinner once in the last month

IN THE NEWS

Clues to a Mystery



COLLEEN PARETT
 Editorial Director
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What accounts for a shift, either up or down, in disease prevalence? Why do certain groups see an increase or a drop, sometimes suddenly? All too often in medicine, researchers just don't know at first. That's the case with the recent alarming rise in colon and rectal cancer cases in young adults—not the older population we tend to associate with this disease. In fact, the standard rule of thumb is to begin colon cancer screening after you reach your 50th birthday, unless you have a family risk. But no guidelines for younger people even exist. And we're talking much younger—one prediction points to an increase in people ages 20 to 34 by a factor of 90% by 2030. After being misdiagnosed, aggressive treatment made a difference for the two young adults we talk to in our story **on page 36**. Meanwhile, researchers offer a few clues to the “why” question—and continue to hunt for the answer to the mystery. — *Colleen*



CHOICES, CHOICES

Men with localized prostate cancer—that means it hasn't spread beyond the prostate—have several treatment options. Feeling overwhelmed? Rest easy. A new study shows that men whose cancer is caught early through a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) screening have a 99% survival rate no matter which treatment option they choose: radiation, prostate removal, or active monitoring.

SOURCE: *New England Journal of Medicine*



15%

OF AMERICAN ADULTS smoke cigarettes. Fewer than 11% of youth smoke them. That reflects 10 million quitters since 2009.

SOURCE: CDC

Genes & Alcohol

A RARE GENE VARIANT may suppress people's appetite for alcohol—a discovery that could help scientists develop medications to treat problem drinking. Researchers analyzed the DNA of more than 105,000 social drinkers and discovered a gene that regulates drinking. A rare variation of this gene was most common among light drinkers. Further study of the same gene in mice revealed that mice without the alcohol-suppressing gene had a greater desire to imbibe.

SOURCE: *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*



PEANUT POWER

EARLY EXPOSURE TO

peanuts might help keep some babies from developing peanut allergies. Researchers tested 617 at-risk infants between 4 and 11 months old for peanut allergy. (Risk factors include egg allergies and eczema.) Half of the allergic infants ate gradually increasing doses of peanut protein, up to .14 ounces. Half of non-allergic infants ate a one-time, .07-ounce dose of the protein. The others avoided peanuts. By age 5, those who had eaten peanuts as babies were 70% to 86% less likely to be allergic.

SOURCE: *New England Journal of Medicine*



Weight Check

Worried your daughter might become overweight? Talk to her about healthy eating—not her weight or how much she eats. Women have a more positive body image, regardless of their weight, when they didn't grow up hearing their parents' comments about it.

SOURCE: Cornell University

BEFORE THE Rx...

Living with severe joint pain? Try low-impact exercise, talk therapy, and over-the-counter acetaminophen or non-steroidal anti-inflammatories before you try prescription painkillers.

SOURCE: CDC



53%

OF AMERICANS

would like to lose weight. While the U.S. obesity rate has soared, that number is lower than it was in the first decade of the 2000s, when 59% wanted to shed pounds.

SOURCE: Gallup

SNOOZE SAVVY

Can't sleep? Try a little hanky-panky. Sex lowers the stress hormone cortisol, and orgasms release prolactin, which makes you feel relaxed and sleepy.

SOURCE: National Sleep Foundation

50

MILLION
Number of Americans who
have nasal allergies.

SOURCE: Asthma and Allergy
Foundation of America

DODGING DEMENTIA

Some 8.8% of adults older than age 65 have dementia. That's down from 11.1% in 2000. Researchers attribute the decline in part to better control of heart disease risks and an increase in the population's average education level. Studies suggest that education might help protect against dementia.

SOURCE: JAMA



BE HAPPY!

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE power of positive thinking. In a study that followed 2,800 older adults for 11 years, the most pessimistic of the bunch were far more likely to die of heart disease during the study period than their positive peers. Could heart disease have been responsible for their negative thinking? Researchers doubt it. Personality traits like optimism and pessimism tend to be ingrained early in life.

SOURCE: BMC Public Health



STUB IT OUT

Adults who smoke just one cigarette a day throughout their lives have a higher risk of dying from cardiovascular disease and cancer (including lung) than people who've never smoked.

SOURCE: JAMA

Here Comes the Sun

Go outside! Exposure to UVB sunlight, especially in adolescence and young adulthood, can lower your risk of becoming nearsighted later. Previous research showed that more time outdoors lowered risk for myopia, as nearsightedness is called, but researchers didn't know whether to credit vitamin D or UVB. In a new study of more than 3,000 adults older than age 65, those who received more UVB sunlight from the age of 14 had lower odds of developing the vision problem. Researchers measured past exposure to the ultraviolet rays through questionnaires and weather records (vitamin D levels had no effect).

SOURCE: JAMA



GETTY IMAGES

BIG QUESTIONS

How Long Can You Live?

Recent research says the human life span may have an upper limit. Hoping you'll beat the odds? Good genes are a great start. Lifestyle choices make a difference, too

SINCE THE 1800s, life expectancy has been climbing. But a new study in *Nature* suggests there's a limit on how long we can live: about 115 years. Not all scientists agree, and some people have blown past expectations, like Jeanne Calment, a French woman who made it to the ripe old age of 122. Want to stretch your time on Earth? Researchers at Johns Hopkins Medicine suggest making these healthy living choices, starting today: Don't smoke. Stay at a healthy weight. Exercise. Stick to a healthy, Mediterranean-style diet.

—KARA MAYER ROBINSON

→ **Expect More**
In the U.S., life expectancy of people born in 2014 is 78.8 years—nearly 16 years more than those born in 1940.

WORK MATTERS

See the Light

Your windowless cubicle could be sabotaging your weight loss plan, lowering your productivity, and boosting your risk of disease. The solution? Get more light into your workday



YOU'VE HEARD IT BEFORE: GAZE AT YOUR SMARTPHONE OR E-READER TOO long before bed, and the glowing blue light will keep you awake. But new research suggests that too little light during the day can have equally concerning consequences, boosting the risk of obesity, depression, and possibly even disease.

When bright light hits the eye in the morning, it stimulates specialized cells in the retina to tell the brain's master clock to reset, explains Phyllis Zee, MD, director of the Sleep and Circadian Rhythms Research Program at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. That stimulation triggers a cascade of processes throughout the body's organs that dictate everything from appetite and metabolism to blood pressure and alertness.

If that light trigger comes too late in the day, things go awry.

In one 2014 study, Zee found that people who got the bulk of their bright light exposure before noon were significantly leaner than those exposed to the most bright light in the evening. After controlling for other factors, light timing accounted for about a 1.4-pound difference. Later

→ **Catch Some Rays**
A desk near a window is ideal.

research found that when people were exposed to bright light at night and then ate, they were more insulin-resistant—meaning less glucose, or sugar, made it into their tissues for fuel and more remained in their blood. Over time, this pattern could lead to weight gain or diabetes.

Other studies show that workers with desks near a window are more alert and productive by day and more physically active after work. And they sleep better at night. In contrast, notes Zee, workers who lack well-timed bright light are more susceptible to heart disease, depression, and certain cancers.

"Many Americans are working in dim environments all day," says Zee, "and by the time they leave it's already dark out. It's a problem." But an easily solvable one, she says. While one hour or more of morning light is ideal, her research shows that as little as 30 minutes of bright light exposure within three hours of waking can have a measurable impact on your health.

So walk to work, take your coffee break outside, or pull your desk closer to a window if you can.

4 Ways

GET THE RIGHT LIGHT INTO YOUR WORKDAY WITH THESE TIPS.

GET OUTSIDE

Light must be 500 lux (a measure of light intensity) or brighter to stimulate positive health changes. Overhead lights in offices hover around only 200 to 300 lux.

UPGRADE YOUR LIGHT

A specialized office lamp set at eye level can provide more than 1,000 lux of light.

MAKE IT BLUE

Studies show blue-hued light (such as fluorescent or LED bulbs), as opposed to green or orange/red light, immediately improves alertness and reaction times.

SWITCH AT NIGHT

Three hours before bedtime, dim your lights and switch to longer, reddish-orange wavelength light (such as "soft" or incandescent bulbs), which has less impact on circadian rhythms.

➔ Search for the slideshow **Foods to Boost Male Health** at WebMD.com.

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



➔ **Grill Master**
Toss salmon filets and your favorite veggies on the grill for a tasty meal.

ASK YOUR DOCTOR OR A DIETITIAN

Q What's the best time of day to eat a healthy meal?

Spread your nutrition throughout the day. Don't cram it all into one meal.

Q How can I stick with a healthy eating plan?

Accountability helps. Enlist a friend to keep you on track—then you return the favor.

Q What's my ideal weight?

Focus on your waist size, not your weight. A big belly ups your risk of serious chronic health problems.

Q How can my diet help with exercise?

Energize your workout with a small, nutritious meal about 30 to 45 minutes prior, such as a cup of Greek yogurt, a banana, and a few nuts.

EAT FIRST

Enjoy a good breakfast. If you eat eggs, one's not enough. Make it two or three, along with fruit and toast. "That may sound like a lot if you're trying to lose weight," says Villacorta, "but it keeps you from overeating later in the day."

UPSIZE IT

Experts often describe a serving of protein—chicken, meat, fish—as the size of a deck of cards. One's enough for a woman, says Villacorta, but not for many men. "Double the deck if you're 6 feet or taller. Otherwise you're left hungry, and you'll likely turn to cookies."

GO YOUR OWN WAY

Don't follow the latest diet. Instead, learn what healthy foods you like, identify your barriers to eating well, and set a schedule you can stick to, says Villacorta. "Make it doable for you."

ENJOY YOURSELF

Don't write off pizza and hamburgers. Instead, set weekly guidelines on how much you can indulge. Villacorta says his rule of thumb is 80% healthy food and 20% indulgence. "Some guys do well with numbers, like figuring how many beers you can have a week without gaining weight."

MEN'S HEALTH

Manly Meals

Guys, you may know what you should eat, but healthy eating entails more than choosing the right foods. You need to know when to eat, how much to eat, and how to indulge judiciously



MANUEL VILLACORTA, MS, REGISTERED DIETITIAN

MEN'S EATING HABITS OFTEN SABOTAGE THEIR efforts to attain or maintain a healthy weight, says registered dietitian Manuel Villacorta, MS. That sabotage begins in the morning and continues throughout the day. Men, he says, often skip breakfast and eat too little for lunch. That leads them to gorge when they get home in the evening.

"When we're hungry, we forget everything we know about eating well," says Villacorta, who sees many men at his San Francisco-based practice.

→ Search for the quiz [The Science of Love](#) at [WebMD.com](#).



MIND MATTERS

Happy Spouse, Healthy You

Happiness is a big predictor of good health—yours and your spouse’s. Happy people have healthier partners. And happy spouses may encourage healthier choices

WHEN YOU’RE SATISFIED WITH YOUR LIFE, YOUR IMMUNE AND CARDIOVASCULAR systems run better, you’re less likely to be troubled by chronic stress, and you may live longer. What’s more, those happiness benefits might be contagious, new research suggests.

“We live in the presence of other people. Maybe they have an impact on our health,” says Bill Chopik, PhD, assistant professor of psychology at Michigan State University. “And,” he adds, “who’s more influential than the people we love?”

→ **A Good Influence**

Research shows that when your spouse is happy, you take more walks.

In a study of 1,981 married couples older than 50, people who had happy spouses were healthier. Even people who weren’t happy themselves enjoyed the health benefits of having a content better half.

Those in the study—a mix of happy and unhappy people—completed surveys every other year from 2006 to 2012. They rated their happiness on the clinically tested Satisfaction with Life Scale. They also rated their own health and reported disabilities, chronic diseases, and health behaviors, such as physical activity.

About 65% of the people in the study were partnered with someone happy. The partners of happy people consistently gave their own health significantly higher marks than people with unhappy spouses. People with happy spouses were also less likely to need help with activities of daily life, such as bathing, dressing, eating, and getting out of bed. They exercised more and even pitched in more around the house.

The research found that when you have a happy spouse, “you take more walks, do more laundry,” says Chopik, who co-authored the study. “You’re also more likely to lift weights, run a marathon, or swim a mile.” The researchers suspect that happy people do two key things to boost their spouses’ health: They encourage healthy choices and take good care of their partners.

Better Together

WORK ON YOUR RELATIONSHIP AND YOUR HEALTH AT THE SAME TIME, SAYS PSYCHOLOGIST **BILL CHOPIK**, PhD.

TAKE A DAILY WALK TOGETHER

“Choose activities that marry health and happiness. Go on a walk or a hike with your partner and talk about your relationship.”

PLAN AND PREPARE MEALS

“Happy people tend to do these things naturally, so they can be the one to say, ‘Let’s eat a balanced dinner, and we’ll feel better.’”

SET A FITNESS GOAL AS A DUO

“Happy spouses energize us. Their happiness is often infectious,” Chopik says. Channel that enthusiasm into helping your partner reach that goal.

INVEST IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP

“If you work on your marriage and make that happier, you will cultivate happiness and, as a result, start to do other positive things.”

GETTY IMAGES

FITNESS

Remote Control

Join a fitness class from anywhere but the gym. How? More fitness studios now open their live classes to people at home. All you need is an Internet connection and a webcam



→ **Stream It Live**
Follow along with a class that may be miles away.

HOW THEY WORK

Remote workouts are trending, but they vary in how they're run. "There are a lot of yoga studios and companies providing online videos or live streaming through a one-way camera," says yoga teacher Robyn Barritt, who manages Yogaia, an online yoga studio. You see the teacher, but she doesn't see you.

Other studios, like Barritt's, encourage you to power up your webcam for real-time feedback. "Throughout the class we can see each of our students and give them encouragement and tips," she says. If you're self-conscious, don't worry; typically, only the teacher sees you.

Some companies, like cycling studio Peloton, stream live rides directly to your at-home equipment to simulate a group ride. Others, such as barre studio Physique 57, offer members a mashup of in-person and streaming workouts. "Some teachers also provide interactive, one-on-one sessions via Skype or Google Hangouts to private students," Barritt adds.

PROS AND CONS

Not only are remote workouts convenient and flexible, but also they often cost less than in-person sessions.

But beware of pitfalls. Too much scheduling flexibility can make it easy to skip a class. Even if you manage to log in, working out at home comes with a multitude of distractions. An easy fix? Pre-register for your class so your instructor expects you. There's something powerful about knowing someone's waiting, even from afar.

LOVE STREAMING FITNESS CLASSES FROM HOME? Pre-recorded workouts are a nifty way to score a full workout without traveling to the gym.

But if you miss the adrenaline rush of a group class, you'll swoon over the newest trend: remote, interactive workouts. You simply log into a studio's website or app before a live class begins, and then join the crowd as they dial up the pace.

"Throughout the class we can see each of our students and give them encouragement and tips."

4 Tips

FITNESS EXPERT **ROBYN BARRITT** OFFERS A FEW WAYS TO GET THE MOST OUT OF A REMOTE WORKOUT.

CHECK YOUR TECH BEFORE CLASS

Is your device working? Did you download the studio's app? How's your Internet connection?

ACE YOUR SPACE

Gather your gear—water bottle, exercise mat, weights—so they're within reach. Choose a space large enough to accommodate every move.

SHOW YOURSELF

Using your webcam? Make sure your camera is on, your room is well-lit, and your device is at the right angle so your teacher can see you.

DON'T BE SHY

You may be tempted to keep your webcam off, but resist the urge. Two-way interaction is the only way to score advice and encouragement from the instructor.

SKIN CARE

Big Reveal

Give your skin a fresh start! Turn to these post-winter exfoliation tips for a healthy, glowing complexion

WHEN OUTDOOR TEMPS DROP, your skin's blood flow also decreases, leading to slower skin cell turnover. "The top layer of skin stays on the face longer, building up and dulling its appearance," says Michael Swann, MD, a dermatologist in Springfield, Missouri. "Exfoliation keeps skin looking fresh." Start by using a cleanser infused with alpha hydroxyl acid (AHA) or beta hydroxy acid (BHA) (two types of chemical exfoliators). Swann suggests using the cleanser with an electric face brush for extra sloughing over the face and lips. Apply an AHA/BHA moisturizer after cleansing to give weatherworn skin a fresh pop. —AYREN JACKSON-CANNADY

→ **Spring Makeover**
Cold temps slow skin cell turnover, but you can reverse that effect as the weather warms up.



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EXPERT PICKS

Out of the Red

Are your cheeks always rosy? Our expert's tips and product picks help tone down the redness



- 1. TEA FOR TWO**
Murad Perfecting Night Cream
(\$55)

"Green tea isn't just for sipping. Look for it in skincare products, like this hydrating night cream; it contains polyphenols that reduce inflammation."

- 2. COOL AND CALM**
Dr. Jart+ Every Sun Day Soothing Gel
(\$32)

"Aloe vera is one of my favorite ingredients for irritated skin. While this soothing gel (made with 81% aloe vera extract) is designed to relieve sunburn, it also helps reduce everyday redness for sensitive skin types."

- 3. BLOCK PARTY**
Paula's Choice CALM Redness Relief SPF 30
(\$29)

"A broad-spectrum sunscreen is non-negotiable. I prefer physical sunscreens with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide because I think they're more broad spectrum and less likely to irritate rosacea-sensitive skin than chemical sunscreens."

- 4. SUPER SERUM**
Skin Inc. Vitamin B3+Niacinamide Serum
(\$45)

"This flush-reducing serum contains niacinamide, which is a B vitamin (vitamin B-3). It evens out spotty skin tone and improves redness."

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➔ Search for the article **18 Common Rosacea Triggers** at WebMD.com.

ANATOMY OF...

Mascara

Take a look at this lush-lash maker

NOT BASIC BLACK

Mascara formulas all contain the same basic ingredients: pigment, oils, waxes, and preservatives. Waxes thicken the formula to coat lashes, and oils and pigment coat lash strands with color.

BRUSHING UP

Early formulas took unusual forms: Imagine a brick of pigment swiped with a damp brush or a cream squeezed from a tube onto a brush.

NAME GAME

The modern version was created in 1913 when a chemist combined coal dust and petroleum jelly and named it Maybelline after his sister Mabel.

VOLUME CONTROL

To make lashes look fuller, gently wiggle the wand against your lashes' base. Separating the lash strands creates the illusion of volume.

WING IT

Apply mascara at the outside edge, which fans lashes out into a wing shape and helps your eyes look more pronounced and dramatic.

TIME TO TOSS

Mascara has a fairly short shelf life. You should toss the tube two to four months after opening. Exposure to air and your eyes makes the wand a tool for spreading bacteria.



➔ Search for the article [How Often Do I Need to Shampoo?](#) on [WebMD.com](#).

BEAUTY SMARTS

Coming Clean

Want more good hair days? According to our myth-busting haircare experts, you might want to rethink your shampoo and conditioner routine



➔ **Shampoo Savvy**
To avoid stripping natural oils, don't shampoo every day.

BY NOW YOU PROBABLY KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE TO FOLLOW THE "lather, rinse, repeat" instructions on shampoo labels, but other misconceptions about the cleansing process linger. Here are a few:

MYTH: YOU SHOULD HIT THE SHAMPOO BOTTLE DAILY

"One of the biggest misconceptions I hear from women is the idea that washing your hair has to be a daily habit," says Kathy Neu, owner of Shear Love Salon in Wappingers Falls, New York. "Not only is it not necessary, but who has the time?"

Here's the reason you can skip lathering up: The cleansing agents in shampoos by definition remove dirt, product buildup—and natural oils. "The downside of shampoos is they remove natural oils that protect your scalp and keep your hair healthy," says Amneh Saleh, owner of Lacquer London Nail & Hair Lounge in Houston.

Frequent washing can also fade your hair color and cause damage due to wear and tear, Neu explains. "I try to talk people into washing every other day," she says.

"But," says Saleh, "I do advise washing at least once a week." If oils build up over prolonged periods of time, thick, scaly crusts can develop

and may require physical removal.

While shampoo-skipping may seem like a struggle for those with oily hair, standard in-shower shampoos aren't your only option. Dry shampoo can help you skip a wash or two. These powders, often sold in aerosol cans, contain starches that absorb oil and freshen hair with fragrance, explains Perry Romanowski, a cosmetic chemist in Chicago and co-author of *The Beauty Brains*. Spray the powder on your roots at night and brush it through, suggests Jet Rhys, owner of Jet Rhys Salon in San Diego. In the morning, do another application to add volume and remove any remaining oils.

There are a couple of exceptions to this rule, however. "Skipping washes can

worsen conditions like seborrheic dermatitis (dandruff) and psoriasis," says Jeremy Green, MD, a dermatologist in Coral Gables, Florida. "People with these conditions often assume that washing more often will make matters worse. On the contrary, washing daily with a medicated soap can reduce inflammation and improve symptoms."

MYTH: YOU SHOULD ALWAYS START WITH SHAMPOO

Don't let the shampoo label boss you around. While bottle instructions often say to follow your wash with the corresponding conditioner, some new products are designed to flip that time-honored practice. The idea is to apply conditioner throughout the hair, then wash it out with shampoo. "I call this a 50/50 shampoo," Rhys says. She notes that this method may deliver more volume and softness for those with fine hair.

"Part of the problem with shampoo is that the detergents can be stripping and damaging," Neu says. "Changing the pattern by conditioning first can keep hair feeling clean while maintaining moisture."

Another option to consider: Applying a pre-shampoo mask or treatment to dry hair before washing. These balms or oils deep-condition to hydrate and help protect hair from damage. "These new treatments are genius ideas because dry

hair absorbs more of the conditioning ingredients than it would wet," Rhys says.

MYTH: YOU DON'T REALLY NEED CONDITIONER

Adding a second step may sound gimmicky, but conditioning does have benefits. "Applying conditioner is absolutely a necessary step," Saleh says. "It protects hair from the elements and keeps hair looking shiny and healthy."

Especially if you're prone to dry hair, be sure to include a conditioner in your hair-care regimen. All hair is vulnerable to daily damage; conditioner is crucial for preventing this. And the drier your hair, the less natural lubrication it has in the form of natural oils, Neu explains.

Dirty Secret

"I HAVE A NERVOUS HABIT OF PICKING AND CUTTING MY CUTICLES. IS THAT REALLY SO BAD?"

BE HANDS OFF

Your cuticles offer defense against irritants and infections as well as encourage healthy nail growth. Cutting, pushing, or chewing them creates small wounds that put your fingers at risk for infection.

WHEN CAN YOU CUT?

Since hangnails or peeling skin is unavoidable, some occasions do call for conservative snipping. But keeping your hands moisturized and leaving your cuticles alone will help prevent ragged edges, which are a result of chronic trauma.

HOW TO BREAK THE CYCLE

If you cut or chew cuticles out of habit, apply a drop of superglue on each nail just above the cuticle. It forms a tactile reminder not to push. And when you visit a nail salon, make sure cuticle scissors are never used on your nails.

—Chris G. Adigun, MD, dermatologist and nail specialist, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

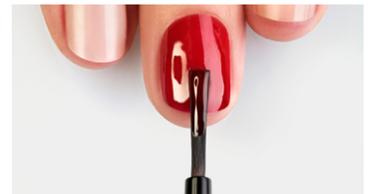
BY Liesa Goins

REVIEWED BY Mohiba Tareen, MD
WebMD Medical Reviewer

THE SCOOP

Is Your Nail Salon Safe?

ON THE HUNT FOR A NAIL SALON? JANET McCORMICK, CO-FOUNDER AND EDUCATOR AT THE NAILCARE ACADEMY IN FORT MYERS, FLORIDA, SAYS TO WATCH OUT FOR THESE:



- 1. INCONSISTENT CLEANING RULES**
Before you schedule an appointment, ask about their protocols for cleaning pedicure bowls and implements. You should hear something like "thorough cleaning in soap and water, followed by disinfection."
- 2. MISSING LICENSE**
All technicians must have a state-issued license displayed in an obvious location in the salon, such as above workstations. Look for a unique license number for each technician, plus a photo.
- 3. HAZARDOUS TOOLS**
Razor blades (including Credo blades) are dangerous. Any evidence of their use signals that the salon is not working safely and may not meet other safety practices.
- 4. BARE HANDS**
Each technician should don a new set of gloves within view of the client.

Aisle Do

SERUMS: THESE POTENT SKIN CARE PRODUCTS CONTAIN CONCENTRATED INGREDIENTS, DELIVERING LIGHTWEIGHT FORMULAS WITH HEAVYWEIGHT BENEFITS. READ ON FOR THREE DERMATOLOGIST FAVORITES.



PRODUCT PICK
NEUTROGENA Rapid Wrinkle Repair Serum (\$21.99)
"Aging is one of my skin care concerns, and this serum contains retinol (similar to Retin A), which has been proven to be one of the best anti-aging ingredients."
Susan Taylor, MD
dermatologist, Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

PRODUCT PICK
SKINCEUTICALS CE Ferulic Serum (\$163)
"This serum is an antioxidant powerhouse; there is lot of good research behind the formulation. It firms my skin, helps with sun spots, boosts the effectiveness of my daily sunscreen, and protects my skin from environmental damage."
Jessie Cheung, MD
dermatologist, Willowbrook, Illinois

PRODUCT PICK
OLAY Regenerist Regenerating Serum (\$24.99)
"This formula is light and contains many ingredients necessary for an effective serum: niacinamide, peptides, vitamin B-3, vitamin E, and green tea."
Maritza Perez, MD
dermatologist, New Canaan, Connecticut

GETTY IMAGES

GETTY IMAGES

PRIME TIME

Dining Collective

Want to instill better eating habits in your kids? Set aside a few nights a week for family meals. Studies show everyone benefits from breaking bread together

ALTHOUGH WE CAN'T CONFIRM THAT FAMILIES WHO EAT TOGETHER stay together, evidence suggests they stay healthier together. Research shows that when families share three or more meals each week, their kids are less likely to be overweight, eat junk food, and develop bad habits, like binge eating. Family meals boost kids' intellectual development, too. Children who engage in enriching dinnertime conversation with their parents have a more impressive vocabulary. And when teens regularly dine with their family, they're less likely to participate in risky behaviors such as drug and alcohol use, sex, and violence. —STEPHANIE WATSON

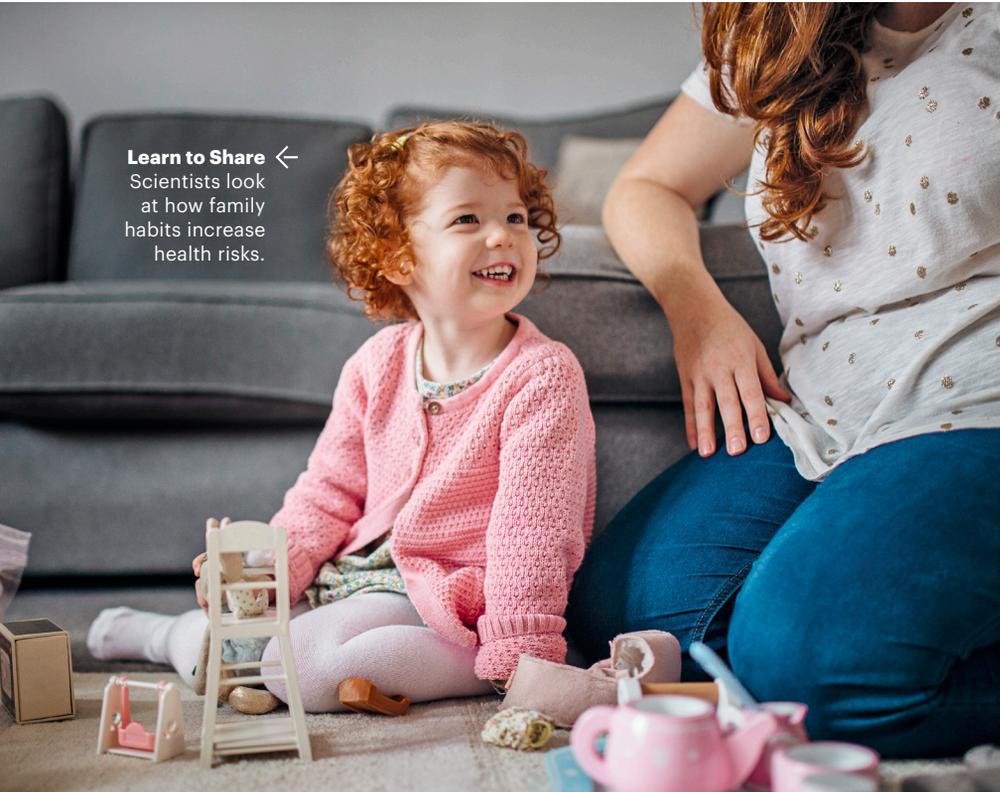


→ **Make a Date**
Schedule family meals on a calendar—and make sure everyone shows up.

PARENTING

Nature or Nurture?

When it comes to developing common diseases that run in families, which is more important: genetic makeup or environment? New research provides some clues



Learn to Share ←
Scientists look at how family habits increase health risks.

of Edinburgh, Scotland, recently conducted a study that aims to answer some of those questions. Tenesa’s team of colleagues examined the medical histories of more than 500,000 people in the U.K. and their families, including both blood and adoptive relatives. The study, published in *Nature Genetics*, used data from the U.K. Biobank.

The results are mixed. They show that scientists often, but not always, overestimate the influence of genetics on conditions like heart disease, bronchitis, depression, high blood pressure, diabetes, lung cancer, colon cancer, prostate cancer, and breast cancer. By not fully accounting for shared family habits, such as smoking, being sedentary, or eating poorly, scientists may have overemphasized the importance of genes in these conditions by an average of 47%, the study found.

“This means it’s a combination” of factors, Tenesa says, at least for these conditions. “It’s not one or the other. Partners and spouses [who are not biologically related] share similar risk. So do siblings.”

Each of these illnesses *does* carry a level of genetic risk, according to the study. For example, the inherited risk of developing high blood pressure for children of a parent with this condition is 27%. The inherited risk for developing depression is 25%. Family habits may then increase that risk, according to Tenesa’s study, even among married couples who do not share genetic backgrounds. For high blood pressure, this additional shared risk is 22%. For depression, add 15%.

Interestingly, shared family habits seem to have little effect on how likely people are to develop other common conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, and stroke, the study found.

DO YOUR EVERYDAY CHOICES—WHAT YOU EAT, HOW much you move, the number of hours you sleep each night, even your emotional well-being—play as vital a role as your genes in how likely you are to develop heart disease and other illnesses that tend to run in families? What about for kids? How much do parents’ health choices affect their offspring? Can siblings’ daily habits influence each other’s physical health?

Albert Tenesa, PhD, a researcher in the MRC Institute of Genetics and Molecular Medicine at the University

“It’s a combination. It’s not one or the other.”

Healthy Home

GENETIC RESEARCHER ALBERT TENESA, PhD, SAYS WHAT HAPPENS IN YOUR HOUSE MAY DIRECTLY AFFECT YOUR BODY.

MARITAL HABITS CAN TRUMP HEREDITY

Tenesa’s study examined couples who shared habits, such as smoking, for decades. They had similar levels of risk for developing the same diseases.

CHILDREN OF SMOKERS CAN LOWER THEIR RISK BY LEAVING HOME

“When kids share a living space with parents who are smokers, they lower their risk simply by moving out when they turn 18.”

ORAL HEALTH HABITS SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

“We brush our teeth to prevent tooth decay,” says Tenesa. The same approach to habits like daily exercise and eating well may prevent other illnesses that families tend to share.

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS VARY ACROSS GENERATIONS

Kids use headphones more often than today’s adults did growing up, so “they’ll likely suffer hearing loss earlier” than their parents, Tenesa says.

➔ Search for the **WebMD Baby App** to track growth and capture your baby's special moments at WebMD.com.



➔ **Sweet Dreams**
Pacifiers help lower the risk of SIDS.

BABY

Safe Slumbers

For the first year of an infant's life, good sleep-time habits are key. One bit of new advice encourages parents to let a baby sleep in their room but not in their bed

ABOUT 3,500 BABIES IN THE U.S. DIE SUDDENLY AND UNEXPECTEDLY IN their sleep every year. But keeping your baby near you in a safe crib or bassinet can cut the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) by half.

"Being in the same room with their parents is protective for babies," says Fern Hauck, MD, a family medicine physician and SIDS researcher at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. She helped draft the new SIDS policy statement of the American Academy of Pediatrics, which calls for room-sharing until a baby is at least 6 months old.

In the struggle to get a baby to sleep, parents often resort to unsafe practices. Researchers put cameras in the homes of infants and found that

ASK YOUR DOCTOR

Q What raises the risk for SIDS?

Preterm infants have a greater risk, as do babies whose mothers smoked during or after pregnancy.

Q I'm breastfeeding. What if I fall asleep with the baby in my bed?

Breastfeeding helps protect your baby from SIDS. In case you doze off, keep the bed clear of pillows and blankets, and don't breastfeed at night on a sofa or armchair.

Q When can I place my baby on his tummy?

Give your baby "tummy time" during the day while he's awake. SIDS risk rises significantly if you put him on his stomach during a nap, even if you usually put him on his back at night.

Q Some mattress labels say they are designed to reduce SIDS. Do you recommend them?

No scientific evidence supports the benefits of special mattresses, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

nine in 10 parents placed something in the crib that could be dangerous, such as a blanket or toy. Some babies often ended up sleeping in a car seat, baby swing, adult bed, or sofa—all of which raise the risk of SIDS.

SIDS occurs most often in the first four months of life, but pediatricians recommend these safe sleep habits for the first year:

- **Put your baby on her back every time she goes to sleep.** However, if she rolls onto her stomach, you don't need to flip her onto her back, Hauck says.
- **Use only a firm mattress with a fitted sheet.** Soft surfaces, such as memory foam, pillows, or a sofa, raise the risk of suffocation, as does bed-sharing—bringing the baby into an adult bed.
- **Move your baby to a crib if he falls asleep elsewhere.** As tempting as it is to leave a sleeping baby in the carrier or car seat, a flat surface, such as a crib or playpen, is safest.
- **Never put loose objects or bedding in the crib.** Even bumper pads and baby blankets pose a risk. Wearable blankets can keep your baby cozy and safe.
- **Breastfeeding and pacifiers get the green light.** Both lower the risk of SIDS.

→ Search for the article [4 Myths About Miscarriages](#) at [WebMD.com](#).



TAMAR GUR, MD, PhD,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
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OB/GYN, OHIO STATE
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PREGNANCY

Surviving a Loss

Miscarriages are common—about 25% of pregnancies end in miscarriage—but that doesn't make them any easier to get through. Our expert offers tips to deal with the emotional aftermath

It seems that miscarriage isn't discussed widely in our society—why do you think that is?

It's an intensely personal loss. Many people are very private and don't wish to let others see them as vulnerable. Unfortunately, that can make having a miscarriage a very isolating experience.

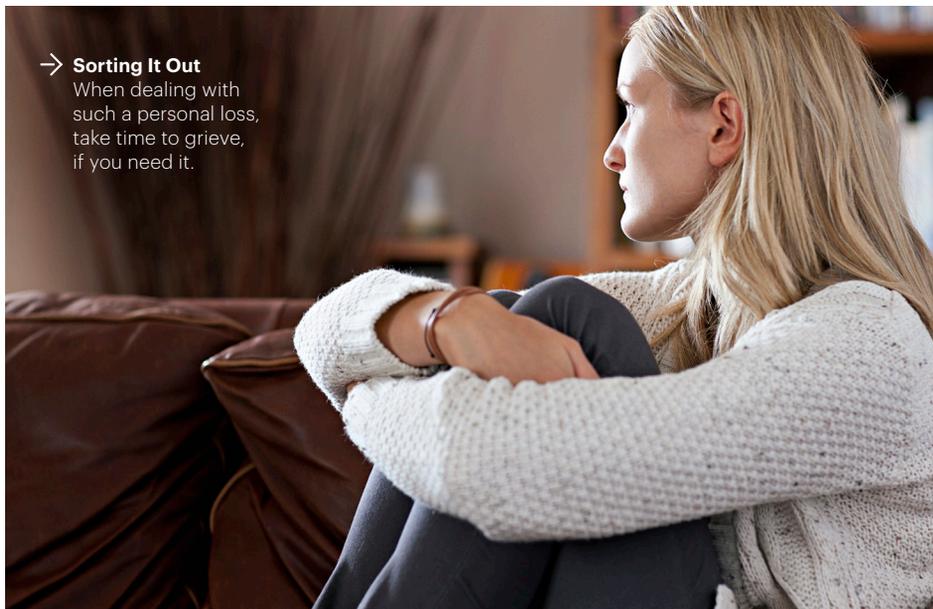
What are some ways a woman who has a miscarriage can deal with the emotional aftermath?

I encourage my patients to reach out to others who are comforting, be that a partner, a parent, a friend, or a co-worker—having someone in your life who can truly listen and support is a huge help.

There are also many online resources where people can tell their stories, which can be helpful. If you find that you have trouble managing daily life activities for more than two weeks, find it difficult to sleep or enjoy yourself, and are feeling hopeless, reach out to your physician, who can refer you to a therapist who can help.

Emotionally, how does a woman know if she's ready to try again to get pregnant?

Some couples can't wait to be given the green light to try again. Others need a break to recuperate from the loss before trying again. If you are no longer overwhelmed by fear or sadness and are able to approach the idea of being pregnant again with a positive outlook, then you are likely ready.



→ **Sorting It Out**
When dealing with such a personal loss, take time to grieve, if you need it.

What can women and their partners expect emotionally if they have a miscarriage?

No two miscarriages are alike, just as no two individuals are alike. But, in general, I find that women mourn the loss of the pregnancy quite deeply. They not only lose the pregnancy but all the hopes and dreams they had for their unborn child. Anger is also an emotion that I see a lot—anger at themselves for “failing” to protect or nurture their unborn child (though there's nothing they could have done to prevent the miscarriage).

“Having someone in your life who can truly listen and support is a huge help.”

4 Questions

IF YOU HAVE HAD A MISCARRIAGE, DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING WITH YOUR DOCTOR.

COULD I HAVE SOMEHOW PREVENTED IT?

Most miscarriages are due to genetic abnormalities and are out of control of the mother-to-be.

WHAT ARE MY ODDS OF HAVING ANOTHER MISCARRIAGE?

Most women who miscarry go on to have a healthy future pregnancy.

DO I NEED ANY SPECIAL TESTING?

If you have two or more consecutive miscarriages, a medical evaluation might help identify a possible cause.

PHYSICALLY, HOW LONG DO I NEED TO WAIT TO TRY AGAIN?

Perhaps as early as the next month after a miscarriage, but get the green light from your doctor first.

→ Search for the article [Teens, Cutting and Self-Injury](#) at [WebMD.com](#).

REVIEWED BY [Roy Benaroch, MD](#)
WebMD Medical Reviewer



→ **Pain Points**
Teens self-injure as a distraction from emotional pain.

KIDS' HEALTH

The Perils of Cutting

With self-injury among teens on the rise, health experts urge parents not to panic but to watch for the signs and take action right away

MORE THAN 13% OF U.S. ADOLESCENTS INTENTIONALLY CUT, SCRATCH, BURN, OR otherwise injure themselves, and emergency room visits for such self-harm have tripled among kids ages 10 to 14 in recent years. But as the so-called “cutting” trend escalates, educators and parents remain perplexed about why it happens and what to do about it.

“People really struggle with understanding this,” says Edward Selby, PhD, an assistant professor of clinical psychology at Rutgers and an expert in non-suicidal self-injury. “They wonder: Why would anyone purposefully inflict pain on their

own body?” Contrary to popular belief, he stresses, teens who cut themselves are not typically trying to kill themselves. Instead, they do it as a distraction from emotional pain. “By applying one type of pain, they get rid of a different type of pain.”

Research suggests self-injury also elicits a euphoric surge of pain-killing endorphins, which kids can grow dependent upon—similar to a drug or alcohol addiction. The behavior also tends to spread through social circles, as teens learn about it from friends at school or via social media.

The consequences can be grave. Cutting can lead to scarring, infection, and hospitalization, and in some cases, death. It can also become a gateway to later suicide attempts, in part because it boosts pain tolerance and habituates teens to the idea of hurting themselves. Self-injurers are seven times more likely than others to attempt suicide.

Thus far, no medications can quell the urge to self-injure, but doctors often prescribe antidepressants or anti-anxiety drugs to address the psychological issues that can lead to it. Selby recommends talk therapy, as well as meditation, art, yoga, and exercise to serve as coping mechanisms. One study looked at the exercise habits of adults with psychiatric problems and found that those who exercised more were less likely to self-injure, probably because the exercise released similar neurochemicals.

While parents should talk to their child immediately if they suspect he or she is self-injuring, they should also “stay calm,” says Selby. “There is a tendency for parents to overreact and assume they have to hospitalize their child.” That is often unnecessary. The vast majority of adolescents who self-harm ultimately grow out of it, he says, and those who undergo therapy tend to do so sooner.

BY THE NUMBERS

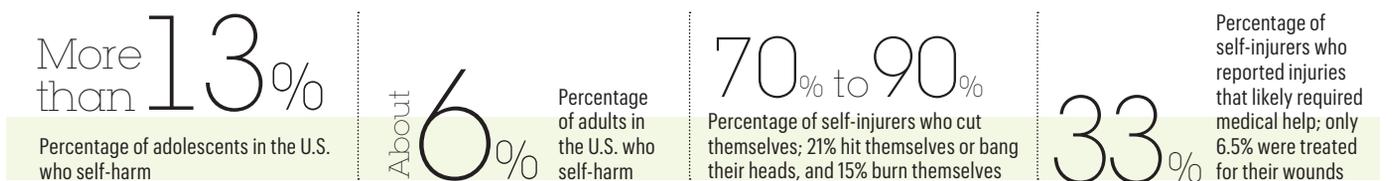
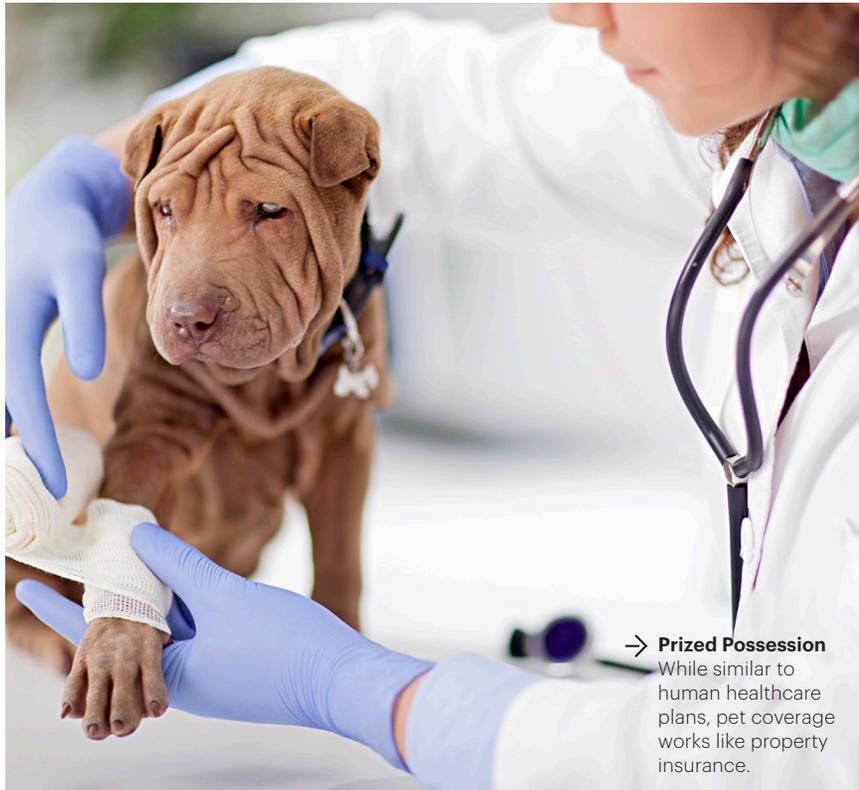


ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES STEINBERG

→ Search for the article [Finding the Right Vet for Your Pet](#) at [WebMD.com](#).

REVIEWED BY *Will Draper, DVM*
WebMD Medical Reviewer



→ **Prized Possession**
While similar to human healthcare plans, pet coverage works like property insurance.

PETS

Companion Coverage

Accidents and illness can happen to anyone—including your four-legged family members. Should you purchase health insurance to protect your pocketbook?

PETS, LIKE PEOPLE, NEED REGULAR MEDICAL CARE—AND THE COST OF visiting a vet adds up.

If your dog swallows a toy, expect to spend \$1,200 to have it removed. Treating a cat with a sinus infection means a bill of about \$395. All told, pet owners spent more than \$15 billion on vet care for their furry family members in 2015, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.

To offset the cost of veterinary care, some people purchase pet insurance policies. The coverage is similar to human healthcare plans: You pay a monthly premium, as well as deductibles and co-pays for care.

“Coverage is generally for unexpected illness and injury, such as trauma,” explains Susan Konecny, RN, DVM, medical director for Best Friends Animal Society.

Most pet insurance plans don’t cover preventive care like vaccinations or elective procedures like spaying or neutering. And since pet insurance is a form of property insurance, you pay the bill upfront and submit receipts to the insurance company for reimbursement.

Countless companies offer pet insurance policies. The cost of coverage depends on the age, breed, and coverage options. *Consumer Reports* found that, on average, premiums start at \$22 per month for dogs and \$16 per month for cats.

While this might seem like a small price to pay to provide veterinary care for your pet, Konecny warns that some policies limit reimbursement amounts, pre-existing conditions are often excluded, and breed-specific issues might not be covered.

Insurers also have restrictions that prevent you from purchasing a policy after learning that your pet needs a pricey procedure. Most coverage will not start until up to 30 days after you buy pet insurance.

Despite the restrictions, Konecny believes pet insurance can be a smart investment. “The biggest advantage is that your pet gets care when unanticipated injury or illness occurs,” she says.

Before purchasing pet insurance, Konecny suggests researching different plans and comparing deductibles, reimbursement levels, benefit limits, and coverage exclusions—and doing it before your pet needs emergency care.

“If you already have a special fund for pet emergencies or no financial constraints that could limit your ability to provide care for your pet, you most likely do not need to consider pet insurance,” Konecny says. “Many pet owners do not have a fund for this type of event and are financially unprepared when disaster strikes. Pet insurance is a way to provide protection in case your pet (and you) may need it.”

BY THE NUMBERS

1.6
million

Number of pets covered by pet insurance policies in North America

\$ 464

Cost of an average annual pet insurance premium

\$ 257

Average claim an owner pays for a pet requiring veterinary care

GETTY IMAGES

By **LAUREN PAIGE KENNEDY** Reviewed by **HANSA BHARGAVA, MD,**
WebMD Medical Editor

Curtis Stone Ready to Dish



Famous FOODIE AND FATHER of two reveals how his kids changed his approach to cooking, talks up his new TV show, and explains why he fights to end hunger in America

GETTY IMAGES; PHOTOGRAPHY BY: GEORGE HOLZ





For those who love to cook

—and for many who don't—chef Curtis Stone whets appetites for inventive recipes and entertaining TV. An acclaimed restaurateur who is also a regular on programs such as *Take Home Chef*, *Top Chef Masters*, and the *Today Show*, Stone attracts a legion of hungry fans.

The garnish? Critics also love him. His Los Angeles restaurant Maude has earned industry accolades, ranking as a semifinalist in 2015 for Best New Restaurant from the James Beard Foundation. His second restaurant, Gwen, which doubles as a butchery and market, opened in summer 2016 on Hollywood's Sunset Boulevard and is already one of the city's most-buzzed-about destinations for celebrity and non-celebrity meat-lovers alike.

Stone, 41, recently brewed up a new reality series, too, and he's ready to dish. *My Kitchen Rules* made its debut in January on the Fox Network. He describes the show as "a bunch of celebrity couples who host parties in their homes and try to out-cook each other." Season one features comedian Andrew Dice Clay and his wife, Valerie; Lance Bass of *NSYNC fame and his mother; and singer Brandy and her husband, music producer Ray J, among other familiar faces. Stone lays out a culinary challenge to the teams, attends the resulting party, and then provides an honest critique. "It's head-to-head competition and pretty good drama," he promises. "You can imagine!"

'This is what's for dinner'

Stone's passion for food—he's written six popular cookbooks, too—is the ideal ingredient for his work with Feeding America (FA), the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization. He serves as a member of FA's board

and has donated his time packing emergency food boxes for the organization's network of food pantries.

"I got involved with Feeding America when I started with *The Biggest Loser*," he says, referring to his appearance on the popular weight-loss program. "In America, many of us worry about how we're going to realize our dreams. In other parts of the world and in parts of America, there are people who worry about how they're going to eat." Currently, 42 million Americans are classified as food insecure, meaning they lack reliable access to enough affordable, nutritious food.

As a parent of two young sons (Hudson, 5, and Emerson, 2) with his actor wife Lindsay Price, Stone sees up close the flip side of hunger: food waste, which is often the result of picky eating. While the chef suggests rotating the menu to constantly introduce new flavors to kids, many parents rue how much rejected food winds up down the garbage disposal in the process—even as 13 million American children regularly go hungry.

To battle food waste at home, childhood nutritionist and registered dietitian Jill Castle, MS, recommends placing newly introduced dishes on communal plates. "Give your child a small serving from the plate, or even a single sprig of broccoli. Save the rest for yourself or others. Then set it out again at the next meal."

Stone does this, too. "I sometimes recycle a dish and put it back out when they next ask for something to eat," he says. "More often than not, when they're hungry they're open to trying new things."

His top priority, he says, is instilling in his children a love for healthy, nutritious food and the art of cooking. "Fatherhood changed me more than anything else," says Stone. "My whole life has been about making special moments with food. When you have a kid you worry more about their health than your own. I used to cook restaurant stuff at home. Now I think about them. I'm responsible for introducing them to good food. And I don't think

"My whole life has been about making special moments with food"

GETTY IMAGES; PHOTOGRAPHY BY: GEORGE HOLZ; RAY KACHATORIAN



we [as a society] do a brilliant job at this, generally speaking. So I have them gardening at home so I can teach them where food comes from and introduce them to all sorts of different things.”

To that end, he enjoys taking his sons outside most mornings to pick fresh fruit from their backyard trees. “It’s good fun,” he says. After such excursions “they sit up on the kitchen counter, and they love pushing things into the juicer. They drink fresh fruit juices first thing.”

He and his wife do face their occasional rebellions. “If they don’t want to eat something, no problem,” he says. “Don’t force it. My attitude is: ‘OK, fine. But this is what’s for dinner.’ They don’t get anything in place of that.”

Such an approach gets a thumbs-up from Castle. “Between the ages of 2 and 6, picky eating is a normal developmental rite of passage,” she says. “I tell parents to expose children to a new vegetable or dish 15 or 20 times. Some kids need as many as 50. Don’t pressure! Research shows that pressuring kids actually turns off their appetite. Tell your child he or she is free to smell it, lick it, even put it in his or her mouth and take it out. They don’t have to eat it.”

She adds this bit of wisdom to worried adults: “Don’t tie emotions or pride or validity about being a good parent to food. Your job is to provide them with a balanced meal. Your kids’ job is to try it. Don’t ‘rescue’ them. If they know you’ll swoop in with chicken nuggets, they’ll go for that every time. Say: ‘It’s your choice whether you eat or not; it’s your body. If you don’t eat now, there will be breakfast in the morning.’”

Wake-Up Call

Between owning and operating two busy restaurants, juggling the demands of a reality series, and playing the role of involved dad, does Stone have any downtime?

“No,” he says with a laugh. “I don’t have a second. I’m crazed. But I have fun doing what I do. Chilling out is not high on my priority list. One day . . .” he trails off before quickly adding, “I used to work out but I’ve fallen off a bit. In the kitchen you stay relatively fit, because it’s intense work. It’s how I get my cardio. And I keep telling Lindsay I’m gonna make a surfing comeback, something I used to do a lot of.”

When he and Price first began dating six years ago Stone learned the hard way how quickly your health can take a downward turn. “I invited her to come to Australia,” he recalls. “We were doing a brunch at my brother’s house and she was going to meet my family for the first time. I felt so rough. By the time we got there I was in so much pain . . . I tried to tough it out, but eventually my beautiful new girlfriend decided to put me in a cab.

“She took me to the hospital where they told me my appendix had erupted. I had to have it extracted and was in the hospital for a few days. She still reminds me how she saved my life!”

And how does he reward such devotion? “She’s a big lobster fan,” he says. “I make her a bit of pasta with lots of chili oils—she loves spicy foods—with lobster and veg from our garden.”

Like the handsome chef himself, a dish anyone could love.

Hungry to Help

Chef **CURTIS STONE’S** concern over the related issues of hunger and food waste in the U.S. inspires his support for Feeding America (FA), the nation’s largest domestic hunger-relief organization.

“Most people are surprised how pervasive hunger and poverty is in America,” says Ross Fraser, FA’s director of media relations. Some numbers:

- One in seven Americans lives at or below the poverty line. But “poverty doesn’t always equal food insecurity,” explains Ross.

“Those who garden, hunt, and fish may have access to nutritional food even if they’re poor. Middle- and even upper-class people may lose their jobs and suddenly can’t pay [bills] or feed their kids. Joblessness can be a bigger driver of food insecurity than poverty.”

- Food pantries help one in seven Americans sometime during the year. Many pantries report that since the financial collapse of 2008, they continue to work at “disaster levels,” according to Ross.
- Currently, 42 million Americans

are classified as food insecure, with 13 million ages 18 or below.

- A recent FA survey connects food insecurity and poor nutrition to higher rates of high blood pressure and diabetes among its food bank patrons.

WANT TO HELP? Ross advises you donate, advocate, and volunteer. “Funds are much more efficient than donating food,” he says. “A single dollar provides the equivalent of 11 meals.”

➔ Search for the slideshow **Quick Tips for Feeding a Picky Eater** at WebMD.com.



GETTY IMAGES; PHOTOGRAPHY BY: RAY KACHATORIAN



➔ **Life Lessons**
Chef Curtis Stone teaches his son, Hudson, where food comes from.

Brewed Benefits



New research shows coffee and tea may have a more positive impact on health than scientists once believed

BY MATT SMITH

REVIEWED BY BRUNILDA NAZARIO, MD, WEBMD LEAD MEDICAL EDITOR

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HEATHER GATLEY



A CUP OF COFFEE CAN PERK YOU UP IN THE MORNING AND A CUP OF TEA CAN SOOTHE YOU after a stressful day. But what about their health benefits? Does either drink really deliver?

After years of study results that whipsawed between dire warnings and cheery possibilities, much of the recent science regarding coffee and tea is positive. For starters, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer recently took coffee off its list of suspected carcinogens, and some research suggests it could help keep colon cancer from coming back after treatment. Other studies indicate drinking coffee might stave off Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

As for tea, various studies point to tea drinkers having lower odds of skin, breast, and prostate cancers. Researchers are still trying to pinpoint the exact ways that happens. But tea, particularly green tea, is rich in compounds like antioxidants, which can limit cell damage and boost the immune system, and polyphenols, which research shows can lower blood pressure and cholesterol.

THE HEALTH CONNECTION

Next question: Is one better for you than the other?

Experts say that's hard to determine because it's difficult to separate their various ingredients, their roles in people's diet, and their effects on various systems in the body.

"I think people are looking at both coffee and tea and how they affect everything, including cancer and GI [gastrointestinal] disease and cardiovascular diseases," says Elliot Miller, MD, a critical care medicine specialist at the National Institutes of Health.

Miller and his colleagues recently looked at signs of heart disease in more than 6,800 people from different backgrounds across the country. About 75% drank coffee, while about 40% reported drinking caffeinated tea. Regularly drinking more than one cup of tea a day was linked to less buildup of calcium in arteries that supply blood to the heart. This calcium buildup can lead to heart disease.

Drinking coffee didn't have an effect on heart disease, but that finding is significant in itself, Miller says. "Very often patients will ask their doctors, 'I've got coronary artery disease, or I've got risk factors like high blood pressure or cholesterol. Is it safe for me to drink coffee?' Because everyone thinks drinking coffee makes your heart excited and is potentially bad," Miller says. "So finding that it's neutral, I think, is pretty important."

Overall, the answer is more complex than pinpointing a single ingredient. "It's more of a dynamic interaction than one single compound," says Lisa Cimperman, a clinical dietitian at University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio. Some researchers have tried to isolate an element in tea or coffee that they think is the secret to one effect or another, "and then they realize that it doesn't have the same effect."

Cimperman says drinking tea has been linked to lower risk of heart disease, improved weight loss, better bone health, and a stronger immune system. A 2013 study suggested some types of tea can boost metabolism and help burn fat, while a 2015 review of previous studies found ingredients in tea can help stave off cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and arthritis. Although some studies have linked

tea drinking to a lower risk of cancer, the evidence is inconclusive so far.

Also in 2015, Australian researchers reported finding a lower risk of osteoporosis-related fractures in elderly women who regularly drank tea—particularly black tea. And as early as 2003, U.S. and Dutch scientists reported that people who added black tea to a moderately low-fat diet reduced their cholesterol levels "by a significant amount." Meanwhile, studies point to coffee as a potential way to head off not just Parkinson's but also type 2 diabetes, liver disease, and heart problems, Cimperman says.

Another recent study, led by Charles Fuchs, MD, MPH, director of the Gastrointestinal Cancer Center at Boston's Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, found regular coffee drinking may help prevent the recurrence of colon cancer after treatment.

In his study of nearly 1,000 patients, Fuchs said, there was a "significant and linear" association between drinking coffee and a reduced risk of colon cancer returning in those who drank four or more cups a day: "The more coffee they drank, the lower risk of recurrence." But the researchers aren't clear which element of the drink contributed to that result, and there didn't seem to be any effect from drinking tea, he says.

"I think you can have two or more cups a day without any concern, and certainly that may benefit you," Fuchs said. But what about for those who don't drink coffee? "If it were somebody who hates the stuff and asks, 'Should I drink it?' I'd say no. I'd counsel them about diet and exercise and avoiding obesity as measures I think would have a similar benefit."

LIFESTYLE FACTORS

Other researchers ask questions about the role genetics and lifestyle play in the effects of drinking coffee or tea. For instance, coffee and cigarettes once went together like...well, like coffee and cigarettes, and cigarettes are known to cause cancer and heart disease.

And some people's bodies digest coffee faster than others; some studies suggest those people may be less likely to have heart disease, says Martha Gulati, MD, head of cardiology at the University of Arizona College of Medicine in Phoenix. Meanwhile, a preference for tea over coffee might reflect other healthier behaviors, she says.

"Does someone who drinks tea do yoga or meditation more?" Gulati says. "I'm not necessarily saying they're associated, but do they exercise more? Are they drinking things like green tea to maintain their weight better than other types of drinks?"

Robert Eckel, MD, endocrinologist at the University of Denver, says a heart-healthy diet is "probably the most important aspect" of preventing heart disease. "We're talking about fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean poultry, fish, legumes, nuts, and avoiding saturated fat. That nutritional message is unchanging," Eckel says.

Other variables play a role. The World Health Organization's ruling on coffee nonetheless cautioned that any kind of extremely hot drink could raise the risk of esophageal cancer, while Cimperman says dumping a lot of cream and sugar into your drink can blunt any benefits.

"No one beverage or food will make or break your diet," she says. "The quality of your diet is always the sum of all the parts."

Key Ingredients

Coffee and tea have been under the microscope for decades, with doctors and scientists trying to figure out which elements of the brews deliver what benefits. Here's a quick look at some main ingredients and how researchers think they might help.

→ CAFFEINE

This stimulant provides the pick-me-up in coffee and many types of tea. It also appears to interfere with proteins that build up in the brains of people with Alzheimer's; these proteins kill brain cells and speed up the disease.

→ POLYPHENOLS

Researchers believe these compounds may act as antioxidants, which reduce the damage to DNA in cells caused by your body's production of energy. That effect can make it easier for your body to fight off degenerative diseases. Polyphenols also reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and appear to interfere with the formation of some types of tumors in laboratory and animal studies. Scientists are still trying to determine whether they have the same effect in people.

→ FLAVONOIDS

These chemicals are part of the polyphenol family. Various studies suggest they might help increase resistance to respiratory infections, boost bone health, and lower the risk of stroke.

ON THE RISE

CASES OF COLON & RECTAL CANCER ARE NOW MORE COMMON AMONG YOUNGER ADULTS. WHY?

BY MATT McMILLEN
REVIEWED BY BRUNILDA NAZARIO, MD
WEBMD LEAD MEDICAL EDITOR

THREE DIFFERENT DOCTORS OVER three years dismissed Ashley Flynn's complaints.

"I had blood in my stool, and each doctor pushed it off as if it were fissures or hemorrhoids or something else minor," says Flynn, who lives outside Kansas City, Kansas.

But it wasn't something minor. Flynn was only 24 when she was diagnosed in 2011 with stage 3 rectal cancer. She had surgery and chemotherapy beginning in late 2011 and has been cancer-free since August 2012.

Cases of colon and rectal cancer are on the rise in people under the age of 50, a group that's rarely screened for them. According to a recent study, rates among younger people increased by



→ **Ignored at First**
Ashley Flynn is now cancer-free after being diagnosed with colon cancer at 24.

“
NO LARGE-SCALE STUDY FOCUSES ON YOUNG PEOPLE.
”

more than 11% between 2004 and 2014. In 2016, about 135,000 people will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer, which includes colon cancer and rectal cancer, according to the American Cancer Society. About one in seven will be younger than 50. Researchers at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center predicted last year that cases of colon cancer among people ages 20 to 34 will increase by 90% by 2030. They expect the number of rectal cancer diagnoses to more than double.

The problem appears to be particularly pronounced among certain minority groups, says Durado Brooks, MD, managing director of cancer control intervention at the American Cancer Society.

“African-Americans are about twice as likely as whites to be diagnosed before the age of 50,” Brooks says. “Young Alaska natives are diagnosed at three times the rate of whites. And this is not a uniquely American phenomenon. European nations and Australia are also seeing a rise.”

Although the overall number of young

people with these cancers remains small compared with older people, the former are often diagnosed with more advanced disease that requires more aggressive treatment.

Flynn’s experience is typical for such cases, says Brooks. “I hear often from young people with the disease that when they told their doctor they had rectal bleeding, their doctor told them, ‘You’re too young to have colorectal cancer screening,’” says Brooks. “That tendency for clinicians to disregard the possibility of colorectal cancer in younger people is one of the things we are working very hard to overcome.”

Overall, says Brooks, the outlook for many younger people is worse because of how late their cancer is diagnosed. “But because they are younger, they do better,” Brooks says. “Someone diagnosed with stage 3 colorectal cancer in their 30s can tolerate more aggressive treatment and will therefore be more likely to do better than someone in their 80s who has stage 3 colorectal cancer along with other health problems.”

Dan Hawkins, an inventory supervisor in Salem, Oregon, learned he had stage 3 colon cancer in 2013, at age 29. He, too, had symptoms for several years before he was diagnosed with colon cancer.

“I didn’t have insurance, so I went to an urgent care clinic,” Hawkins says. “They told me not to worry about it.”

Two years later, when he could no longer ignore the pain that had started building in his groin, he went to the emergency room. That visit led to a colonoscopy, which revealed a tumor pressing against his prostate. “I wish the first doctor I had seen had been more proactive and referred me to a specialist,” says Hawkins, who has been in remission since late 2013, after surgery and chemotherapy.

WHY THE RISING NUMBERS?

Experts don’t know why the rates of colorectal cancer are rising among young people, which began around 1990, says Yi-Qian Nancy You, MD, a colorectal cancer surgeon and researcher at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

You says that about a third of cases can be attributed either to a genetic condition or family history of the disease. But for the remaining two-thirds, it’s unclear. “We

don’t know if it’s diet or lack of exercise or other factors,” she says. “There’s no large-scale study focused on young people.”

Brooks points to changes in diet over the last few decades as a possible explanation. “Younger people today eat a lot more fast food and processed food—things we know are associated with colorectal and other kinds of cancers,” he says. “And the increasing obesity rate is a huge concern.”

Hormones and antibiotics used on livestock and present in meat and other animal products might reduce the ability of a person’s gut bacteria to protect from the disease, he adds. “There’s a lot of speculation about potential underlying causes.”

If you’re in this age group, what can you do to protect your health? Current guidelines recommend testing for colorectal cancer starting at age 50. But You says that screening should start much earlier if you have a family history of these cancers or a genetic condition, such as Lynch syndrome, a disorder that increases your risk of colorectal and other cancers, or familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP), which causes benign growths that eventually become cancerous.

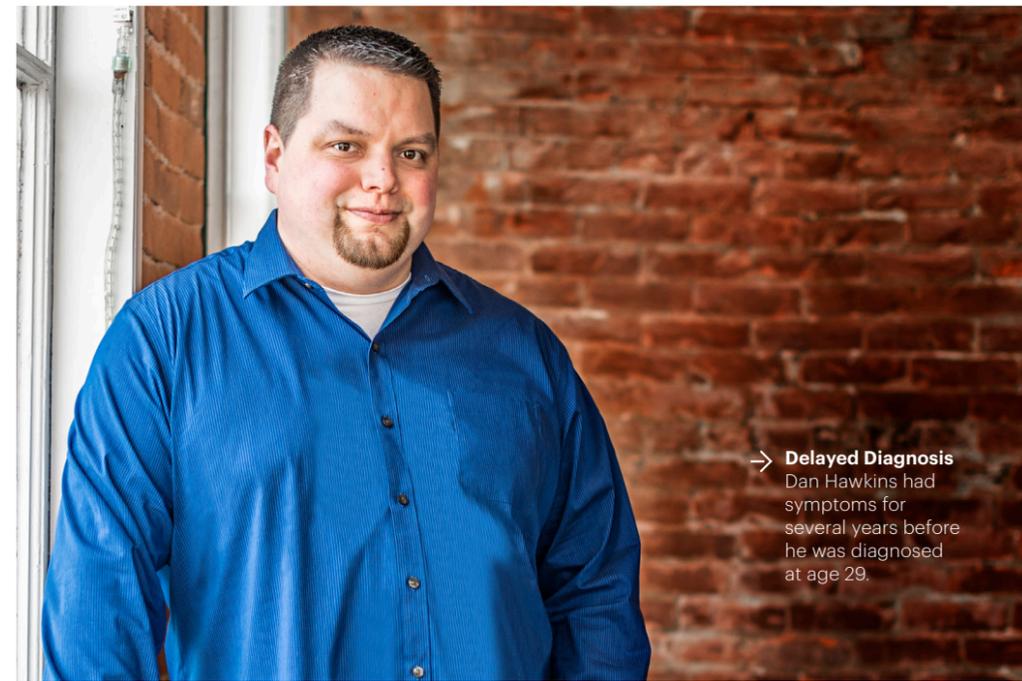
“We need to identify those 15% who have a hereditary syndrome,” says You, “and we need to get people with a family history of the disease to show up and get screened.”

Your family history should go back two generations and include your parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. If anyone in your family had colorectal cancer, says You, get tested 10 years before the age at which the youngest person in your family got the disease. The American Cancer Society also suggests talking with your doctor about genetic counseling if you have a family history of colorectal cancer. A genetic counselor can help determine if you have genes that put you at an increased risk.

“If you diagnose people with such a history or genetic syndrome, their whole families should be diagnosed very early and very aggressively,” says You.

Flynn and Hawkins, however, had no such risk factors. And for young people like them, testing guidelines are unlikely to change any time soon.

“We have to do studies to find out what effect screening would have in young patients and in what age groups screening would be most effective,” says Matthew Kalady, MD, a colorectal surgeon and



→ **Delayed Diagnosis**
Dan Hawkins had symptoms for several years before he was diagnosed at age 29.

“
WE NEED TO GET THOSE WITH A FAMILY HISTORY SCREENED.
”

co-director of the Cleveland Clinic’s Comprehensive Colorectal Cancer Program.

Flynn, now 29 and a pediatric oncology nurse practitioner, has a message for healthcare professionals: “As a provider, you have to keep those rare cases on your mind so that the next time a 30-year-old comes in with rectal bleeding, you don’t push it off as fissures or hemorrhoids right away. Instead, maybe dive into the causes a little deeper.”

She may be cancer-free but she never expects to be worry-free. She wonders: What if the cancer comes back? But she tries not to live in fear.

Hawkins, who goes in for checkups every six months now, must use a colostomy bag for the rest of his life.

“My life will never be what it was before,” he says. “However, as cancer survivors, we have to create a new normal.”

HEALTH EXPERTS URGE PATIENTS AND PRIMARY CARE DOCTORS TO RECOGNIZE AND TAKE SERIOUSLY ANY COLORECTAL CANCER SYMPTOMS.

The most common include:

- Changes in bowel habits
- Blood in the stool or rectal bleeding
- Persistent abdominal cramping or pain

“It’s really, really important for people who have such symptoms to talk to their doctor and get evaluated,” says colorectal surgeon Matthew Kalady, MD. “Express your concerns and be an advocate for yourself. If your concerns are not met, seek a second opinion.”

PHOTOGRAPHY BY: PHOTOS EDGE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY: THE STUNNING SWAN PHOTOGRAPHY

→ **Lemon Fresh**
Lemons are popular in cuisines around the globe.

ZESTY GOODNESS

Main Squeeze

When life gives you lemons, your health benefits. This juicy fruit contains powerful disease-fighting antioxidants, makes a mean marinade, and delivers a bright flavor boost to spring veggies

WAKE UP YOUR HIBERNATING taste buds with lemon juice. Just one ounce offers 21% of an adult's daily value of immunity-boosting vitamin C. (Take that, spring colds!) A splash of lemon juice has an almost-magical ability to enhance the flavor of vegetables and fish; use it in place of salt. Squeeze a lemon over beans and greens (such as spinach or kale) to help your body absorb the veggies' plentiful iron, and add lemon zest to salad dressings and soups for a delicious citrus kick. Look for lemons with smooth, bright yellow skin and no traces of green (a sign of under-ripeness). – ERIN O'DONNELL

➔ Search for the slideshow
12 Ways to Cook Foolproof
Fish at WebMD.com.

3 WAYS

Salmon

Casting around for a simple, healthy meal? Catch this: Salmon is a super food full of flavor, protein, and heart-healthy omega-3 fats. Best of all, salmon cooks in a snap, making it an easy lunch and weeknight option



1

THE POWER LUNCH

Spring Salmon Salad

Substantial salmon stands up well to the grill and pairs nicely with crisp, cool greens. (And salads win as a tasty way to get more veggies in your day.) Serve the salad with a crusty whole grain roll.

➔ **THE MIX**
Salmon + salad greens, sugar snap peas, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, feta



➕ **MAKE IT** Toss salad greens with blanched sugar snap peas, cherry tomatoes, cucumber slices, and minced red onion. Divide salad into four bowls, and top each one with 4 oz grilled salmon and a sprinkle of feta. To make a

dressing, whisk together ¼ cup each of lemon juice and olive oil with 1 tbsp Dijon mustard, 1 tsp honey, chopped fresh basil, and salt and pepper. Drizzle over each salad, and serve immediately. **SERVES 4**

PER SERVING (2 CUPS SALAD, 4 OZ SALMON, 1 TBSP DRESSING) | 436 calories, 26 g protein, 8 g carbohydrate, 34 g fat (7 g saturated fat), 71 mg cholesterol, 2 g fiber, 4 g sugar, 344 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 69%

2

THE SIMPLE SUPPER

Walnut-Crusted Salmon

Salmon gets a crisp topping made with whole wheat panko, crunchy Japanese bread crumbs you can find in most large supermarkets. It makes a satisfying meal with steamed asparagus and quinoa on the side.

➔ **THE MIX**
Salmon + Dijon mustard, honey, whole wheat panko bread crumbs, chopped walnuts, parsley



➕ **MAKE IT** Preheat oven to 400°F. Make a sauce for the salmon by combining 1 tbsp Dijon mustard and 1 tbsp honey. Brush on the tops of 4 salmon filets (4–6 oz each). Top the filets with a mixture of 2 tbsp whole wheat

panko, 2 tbsp chopped walnuts, and 1 tsp chopped parsley. Finish with a drizzle of olive oil on each filet. Bake 10–15 minutes or until flaky, and serve with lemon wedges. **SERVES 4**

PER SERVING (1 4–6 OZ FILET) | 265 calories, 29 g protein, 9 g carbohydrate, 12 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 78 mg cholesterol, 1 g fiber, 3 g sugar, 282 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 42%

3

THE BETTER BURGER

Salmon Burgers

Here's a flavorful alternative to the traditional all-beef burger; try it topped with a tasty Greek yogurt sauce on a whole-grain bun. It's a fun way to encourage fish skeptics to give salmon a try.

➔ **THE MIX**
Salmon + panko bread crumbs, egg, mayonnaise, lemon, shallot, parsley, hot sauce



➕ **MAKE IT** In a medium bowl combine 1 lb cooked, flaked salmon; ¼ cup panko, 2 large beaten eggs; ¼ cup mayonnaise; fresh lemon juice; and minced shallot. Add fresh chopped parsley, a dash of hot sauce, and salt and pepper. Form into four patties and chill for 1 hour. Cook burg-

ers in a nonstick pan on both sides until golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Meanwhile, make a sauce: Stir together ½ cup plain Greek yogurt with 1 tbsp each of capers, lemon juice, and chopped parsley. Top the salmon burgers with the sauce. **SERVES 4**

PER SERVING (1 BURGER) | 436 calories, 26 g protein, 8 g carbohydrate, 34 g fat (7 g saturated fat), 71 mg cholesterol, 2 g fiber, 4 g sugar, 344 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 69%

PHOTOGRAPHY: RICK LOZIER; FOOD STYLING: CHARLIE WORTHINGTON



Fines Herbes Omelet

INGREDIENTS

- 10 large eggs, preferably organic
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup loosely packed, chopped fresh herbs (¼ cup chopped parsley plus ¼ cup combined tarragon, chives, and chervil)
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 tbsp canola oil

MAKE IT (SERVES 4)

1. Using a fork, beat the eggs, salt, and pepper in a bowl until thoroughly mixed. Stir in the herbs.
2. Heat half of the butter and oil in a 10-inch nonstick skillet over high heat. When the butter and oil are hot, add half of the egg mixture. Stir continuously with a spatula or wooden fork, shaking the pan, for about 2 minutes to create the smallest-possible curds. When most of the mixture is solid, cook it without stirring for 10 seconds to create a thin “skin” on the underside of the omelet, binding it together.
3. Roll the omelet by folding over one side and then the opposite side; invert it onto a plate. Repeat the process, using the remainder of the ingredients, to make a second omelet. For four servings, cut each omelet in half and serve immediately.

PERSERVING | 264 calories, 16 g protein, 2 g carbohydrate, 22 g fat (8 g saturated fat), 480 mg cholesterol, 367 mg sodium, 0 g fiber, 1 grams sugar. Calories from fat: 74%

OFF THE MENU

Build a Better Omelet

Time for breakfast—or dinner. Elevate your eggs with an omelet from legendary French chef, teacher, and cookbook author Jacques Pépin



JACQUES PÉPIN,
CHEF AND
COOKBOOK
AUTHOR

“WHEN I WAS A KID WE ATE MORE EGGS THAN MEAT, AND OMELETS HAVE always remained something special,” says Pépin, 81. His favorite, especially at this time of year, is the fines herbes omelet he shares here, taken from his cookbook *Essential Pépin*. “When I have these herbs in my garden, making this omelet is a rite of spring for me.”

Hot Stuff

THE HEAT IS ON! ADD SOME FIRE TO OMELETS OR OTHER EGG DISHES. **DYLAN KEENEN**, CO-OWNER OF HEAT, A BERKELEY-BASED HOT SAUCE SHOP, OFFERS FIVE OF HIS FAVORITES.



TABASCO
HABANERO

“Flavored with papaya, tamarind, and hints of banana, this sauce boasts both a kick and that vinegary bite familiar to Tabasco lovers. Pair with a ham-and-cheese omelet.”



EL YUCATECO
KUTBIL-IK

“Earthy and habanero-centric, this Mayan-style sauce combines tomato, some fruit, and a judicious amount of vinegar. Splash it on a chorizo omelet.”



CHALULA
ORIGINAL

“Cumin and two delicious chilies—chile de arbol and piquin peppers—flavor this milder yet versatile hot sauce. Use it to flavor any omelet.”



YELLOWBIRD BLUE
AGAVE SRIRACHA

“A good balance of sweet and heat, this Asian-style sauce gets its flavor from red chilies, garlic, and vinegar. It’s not a scorcher, so try it on an Asian-inspired omelet.”



BIG FAT 708

“The hottest option, 708’s complex flavor comes from superhot 7-Pot peppers, citrus, pineapple, pomegranate molasses, and a unique blend of spices. Cheesy omelets make a great match.”

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.

1 Day, 5 Meals: White Beans

Canned beans are great in a pinch, but cook up a big batch from scratch and you'll fall in love with the richer flavor and texture, especially with versatile white beans

MONDAY

PASTA WITH BEANS AND GREENS

Dark leafy greens, such as kale or spinach, team with white beans and chunky pasta, olive oil, garlic, and grated Parmesan for a hearty weeknight meal.



TUESDAY

QUICK CASSOULET

Add a quart of cherry tomatoes, a 14 oz can of chopped tomatoes, and a small, diced onion to a square baking dish. Drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper, rosemary, thyme, and a glug of white wine, and toss. Place four chicken sausages on top and roast in a hot oven until the tomatoes burst. Add a couple cups of white beans, stir together, and bake until heated through.



WEDNESDAY

'CREAMY' BROCCOLI SOUP

Cook chopped onion and garlic in some olive oil. Add broccoli florets and chopped basil, salt, and pepper. Cover with vegetable broth and simmer until vegetables are cooked through. Add white beans and blitz in a blender until smooth and creamy.

THURSDAY

WHITE BEAN DIP

Who says you need chickpeas to make hummus? Just blend white beans with a touch of tahini, lemon juice, water, and garlic for an almost-instant dip.



FRIDAY

SWEET POTATO QUESADILLAS

You won't miss cheese in these vegan quesadillas. Mash peeled, cooked sweet potatoes together with whole or mashed white beans, salt, pepper, and chipotle powder paste. Spread over corn tortillas and fold in half. Place in a skillet with a bit of olive oil, and heat through. Serve with avocado and lime.

KIDS' BOX

Bake It Better

KIDS LOVE HELPING YOU BAKE, BUT NOT EVERY SESSION HAS TO END WITH COOKIES. TRY THESE HEALTHIER ALTERNATIVES



Baking with kids helps them practice math skills and lets you bond with them during a fun activity. And then you both get to eat the results. Some ideas:

- Swap white flour for whole wheat pastry flour.
- Choose healthier fats: more canola and olive oils, less butter.
- Add grated zucchini or carrots to muffins and quick breads.
- Bake single-serving foods, such as individual berry crisps or mini muffins.
- Make something savory: a pot pie with a whole wheat olive oil crust, a veggie lover's pizza, or a crustless quiche.

**1. LINGUINE**

Perfect with a sea-food sauce. Linguine and clams—with garlic, olive oil, and red chili flakes—just wouldn't be the same with any other shape.

2. STROZZAPRETI

Buy fresh, handmade twists at a good market, then toss with a fresh-basil pesto sauce, which just coats the whole pasta.

3. PAPPARDELLE

Another good pasta to purchase fresh, these very thin, very wide egg noodles pair perfectly with a long-cooked meat sauce (such as ragù) made with braised, shredded beef.

4. ORECCHIETTE

This versatile ear-shape pasta matches well with many different sauces. Vetri's favorite way to serve it: with a white sauce made with broccoli rabe and spicy sausage.

5. RIGATONI

Serve this tube-shape pasta with a really meaty Bolognese sauce. Ground beef offers a perfect option because of its texture and ability to hide inside the rigatoni.

PASTA 101

Pasta Pairing

This versatile food comes in all shapes and sizes to suit both your mood and your sauce

TRADITION MAY DICTATE THAT YOU SHOULD SERVE SOME PASTAS ONLY WITH certain sauces. But don't get hung up on that. What matters, says Marc Vetri, the James Beard Award-winning chef of Philadelphia's Vetri and author of *Mastering Pasta*, is that the pairing makes sense. Here, Vetri selects five of his favorite types of pasta and the sauces he often chooses to pair with them.

CUTTING EDGE

How could a season as lovely as spring wreak such havoc?

The answer may be written in your genes. More than 100 genes can predispose a person to the sneezing, itchy throat, and watery eyes that herald spring's arrival

→ **Gesundheit!**
Allergies affect up to 30 million adults and 40% of children.

RESEARCHERS COMPARED THE DNA of a group of people with springtime hay fever to that of a group who don't have allergies. In the allergic group, up to 98 genes—many related to immune response—were turned up too high, or “up-regulated.” This makes the genes too sensitive and/or over-active. Then, some 68 other genes in the allergic group were turned down too low or “down-regulated.” These genes were mostly related to regulating the actions of other genes, and they underperformed in the allergic group. The researchers believe that it's not just the presence of some of these up- and down-regulated genes alone that triggers

allergies. It's also their interaction with each other.

You can't change your genes, but you can do something about the way they make you feel. If prescription and over-the-counter allergy medicines don't bring you complete relief, probiotics might help. More research is needed, but a recent study found that a strain of probiotics known as lactobacillus paracasei, or LP-33, may help reduce both the runny, stuffy nose and itchy, watery eyes brought on by seasonal allergies. Allergies are an over-reaction of the immune system. Researchers believe probiotics may stimulate the gut to help regulate the body's immune response. —SONYA COLLINS





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

EXPERT Q&A

For Mature Audiences

Our expert answers top questions about drugs and older adults



→ **Managing Meds**
Review your medications with your doctor at least once a year.

WITH AGE COME PHYSICAL CHANGES—PERHAPS THE NEED FOR READING glasses or aching joints that keep you from playing with your grandchildren. Another change is how your body metabolizes medications. The FDA’s John Whyte explains.

Q What should I know about interactions and side effects?

A As you age, physical changes can affect the way medications are handled in the body. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about possible interactions and side effects. Include all over-the-counter medications, herbal preparations, and supplements. Remember, medications could be behind new health problems or bothersome side effects, so talk with your doctor.

Q What should I ask about my medications?

A Discuss your medications with your doctor each visit or at least once a year, and review which are still necessary and which ones you can stop taking, if any. Some questions might fall through the cracks if you see multiple health providers, so be sure to talk to all of them. Remember, there are no stupid questions about medicine.

Q I’ve taken this medication for years, but I don’t think I need it anymore. Can I stop?

A No. Continue taking your medication as prescribed, even if you feel better or think the medicine isn’t working. Avoid skipping doses or stopping medications without consulting your doctor.

Q I take so many medications—what’s the best way to keep track of them all?

A Keep an updated medication list with you and include the brand or generic name, why you take the medication, the dosage or strength (how many milligrams), and how often you take it. Give a copy to a friend or family member to help keep track, especially in an emergency or if you’re traveling. Ask your doctor about online tools, smartphone apps, or the old-fashioned pill reminder box.

BY THE NUMBERS

14 Average number of prescription medications older people take

55% The percentage of older adults in a survey who admitted to not taking their medications as directed

30% TO 40% Decrease with age in the rate at which drugs may be absorbed and metabolized by the body

→ Search for the video [When Autism Grows Up](#) at [WebMD.com](#).

REVIEWED BY [Hansa Bhargava, MD](#)
WebMD Medical Editor

LIVING WELL

Help for Kids with Autism

Parents and caretakers can do a lot to improve the well-being of a child who has this neurodevelopmental brain disorder



→ **Take an Interest**
Tap into your child's passion, such as trains or cars, to help him learn faster

YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD THE STATISTICS: ABOUT ONE IN EVERY 68 children in the U.S. has autism. “This brain-based disorder affects almost all aspects of a person’s development,” says Grace Gengoux, PhD, a child psychologist with Stanford Children's Health.

“People with autism have problems with social interaction and understanding what other people are thinking and feeling,” she explains. Another core feature in those with autism is repeating words or actions.

“The good news is that many kids respond to early intervention,” says Gengoux, who is also a clinical associate professor at Stanford University School of Medicine and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford. “If a child shows any signs of autism, it’s important to be evaluated quickly and—once diagnosed—start treatment immediately.”

Treatments can include behavioral, speech, and occupational therapies; special education; and social and communication skills, she says. Other actions you can take:

PARTNER WITH PROFESSIONALS

Although therapists can provide treatment, “it’s really very effective if parents learn strategies for helping their kids,” says Gengoux. “Parents are experts in their own child’s behavior and are uniquely qualified to provide treatment.”

FOLLOW YOUR CHILD'S INTERESTS

“Children with autism usually have really strong areas of interest,” explains Gengoux. In younger kids, that might be trains or leaves or cars, she says.

“If a parent can figure out how to tap into a child’s areas of interest and teach them the things they need to know through that interest, it can be very productive. Kids learn a lot faster,” she adds.

THINK VISUALLY

“A lot of times kids with autism learn well through visual information,” such as pictures and diagrams, says Gengoux. Creating maps or visual schedules for the day can help your child learn and ease anxiety, as many kids with autism prefer routines. “The more a child’s day can be predictable, the better usually their behaviors are.”

ASK YOUR DOCTOR

Q What's the prognosis for my child?

The answer varies by child, but making sure kids have good school and home programs can be very effective.

Q What treatments should my child receive?

Treatment is individual, but research shows that 25 hours a week of autism-specific services can help.

Q How can I help my child make friends?

Schedule interactions inside and outside of school, such as playdates and sleepovers. Keep playdates short and focused on activities that both children enjoy.

Q Will a special diet help my child?

The answer for now is no. No good scientific evidence supports a particular diet for kids with autism.

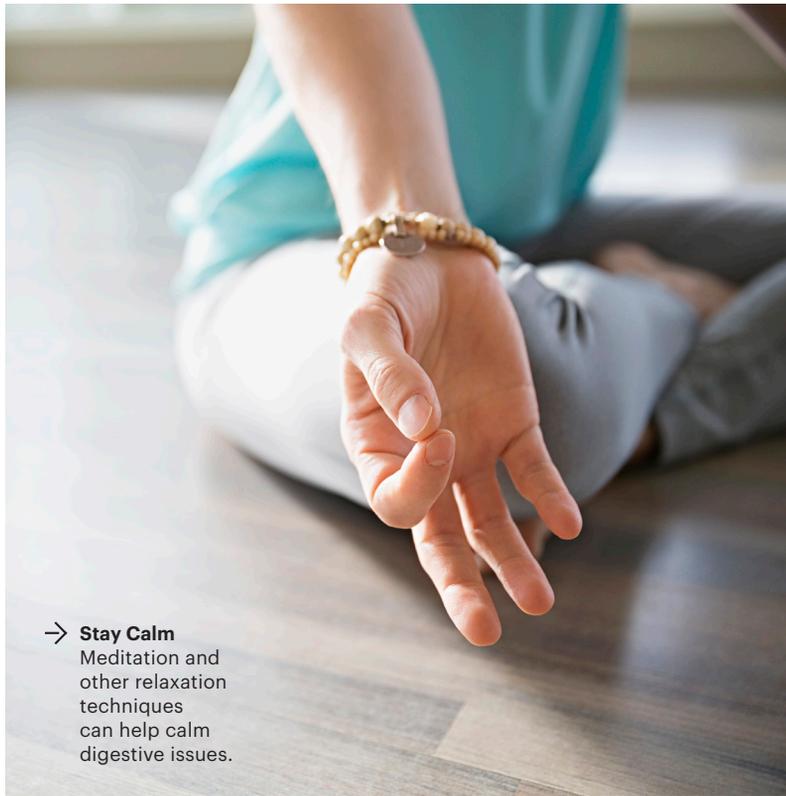
→ Search for the slideshow [Digestive Myths Debunked](#) at [WebMD.com](#).

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

HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

Know Your Digestion

For millions of people, some common disorders can cause the digestive process to be uncomfortable, unpredictable, and—for some—disabling



→ **Stay Calm**
Meditation and other relaxation techniques can help calm digestive issues.

10 Ways to Cope

TAKE CHARGE WITH THESE LIFESTYLE TIPS

- 1. ENLIST YOUR PHONE**
Download Toilet Finder or a similar app to find a bathroom if your irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) acts up while you're out.
- 2. PRACTICE CALM**
Stress can worsen digestive symptoms, so try exercise, meditation, or other relaxation techniques.
- 3. TRY HYPNOTHERAPY**
Studies suggest it can significantly ease IBS and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) symptoms.
- 4. BULK UP**
If you have IBS and it causes constipation, gradually increase the fiber in your diet for relief.
- 5. STEER CLEAR**
Pay attention to which foods worsen your digestive distress and avoid them.
- 6. SHRINK YOUR PLATE**
Eat smaller, more frequent meals to reduce the risk of IBD flares and acid reflux.
- 7. CATCH IT EARLY**
Know the early warning signs of an IBD flare-up and be prepared with prescribed medications.
- 8. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**
If you have IBD, learn how the law entitles you to accommodations at work.
- 9. GO LEAN**
Fatty foods can cause reflux flares, so choose lean meats, poultry, fish, and other lower-fat protein sources.
- 10. LOOSEN UP**
To reduce reflux-inducing abdominal pressure, slip into looser-fitting clothing.

EXPERT TIPS



“Manage gastroesophageal reflux disease symptoms by making important lifestyle changes. Don't eat within two to three hours of bedtime. Make a list of foods that trigger your symptoms and avoid them. And, if you're overweight, shed extra pounds.”

Abdullah Shatnawei, MD
gastroenterologist, Cleveland Clinic



“If you have gastrointestinal symptoms such as bloating or diarrhea, this could be related to too much lactose intake. Stopping all dairy products for a week usually provides an answer.”

William M. Kelley, MD
assistant professor,
gastroenterology and hepatology,
Oregon Health and Science
University, Portland



“When you see your doctor, bring prior test results, a food diary, and a list of lifestyle changes or events that may have an impact on your IBS, all of which can save time, minimize testing, and expedite treatment.”

David H. Robbins, MD
program director, division of
gastroenterology, Lenox Hill
Hospital, New York City

BY THE NUMBERS: Facts and Stats on Trending Health Topics

Parkinson's Disease

10 MILLION

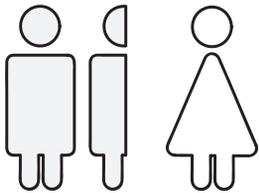
People worldwide with Parkinson's disease

60,000

New diagnoses of Parkinson's each year

15% TO 25%

PEOPLE WITH PARKINSON'S who have a relative with the disease



1.5x

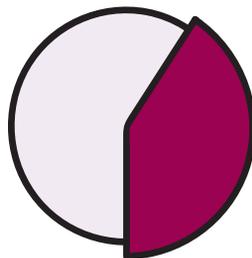
Increased risk of Parkinson's for men vs. women

\$152 MILLION

Estimated amount spent on Parkinson's disease research at the National Institutes of Health in 2016

40%

People with Parkinson's who also develop depression symptoms



1,000,000

People in the U.S. with Parkinson's disease

62

Average age of diagnosis of Parkinson's disease

4

Number of main motor symptoms:

- Tremors
- Stiffness
- Slowness of movement
- Impaired balance

2.5 HOURS

Amount of exercise each week that could slow the decline in quality of life for people with Parkinson's disease

600+

NUMBER OF clinical trials ongoing in the U.S. related to Parkinson's disease

\$25 BILLION

Total cost of Parkinson's in the U.S.

➔ Search for the slideshow [A Visual Guide to Multiple Sclerosis](#) at [WebMD.com](#).

REVIEWED BY [Arefa Cassoobhoy, MD, MPH](#)
WedMD Medical Editor

MY STORY

The New Normal

An active mom of three adjusts to life with multiple sclerosis



Let It Go ←
Marleigh Brown learned to let go of things she can't control.

I WAS DIAGNOSED WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS) IN 2009 when I was 36 years old. My physical symptoms came on suddenly. When I bent my head forward, I got what felt like electrical shocks running down my legs. That led to weakness in my hip to the point where I couldn't lift my leg up, but in hindsight I'd been having symptoms before that.

For a couple of years, I'd noticed cognitive issues that doctors couldn't put their finger on—except that I was a frazzled mother of three young children under 6. I had trouble holding onto a topic in conversation. I'd walk into the kitchen and forget what I was looking for. And I had bouts of extreme fatigue, but doctors also attributed that to being a tired mom.

“Instead of getting angry and mourning the woman I once was, I find humor in my forgetfulness.”

My grandmother had MS—those with a family history of autoimmune conditions such as MS can be predisposed to develop the disease—and my doctor ordered an MRI. It showed I had active lesions in my brain. The electrical shocks, called Lhermitte's signs, were caused by a lesion in my cervical spine.

I went on medication to help with the flare-ups. I was pretty healthy before MS, but I became much more conscious afterward. I'd always eaten healthy and been an avid exerciser. I used to race sprint triathlons, but after the diagnosis I wasn't exercising to become faster but to feel my best and maintain a healthy body.

I jog at my own pace now. It's more of a shuffle. I still love cycling, and those muscles are as strong as ever. My memory is not the same, but I've learned to write things down and have accepted my new normal. Instead of getting angry and mourning the woman I once was, I find humor in my forgetfulness.

Another blessing I've discovered through MS is yoga. I'd read studies and knew it would be good for me, and I've been practicing ever since I was diagnosed. Yoga helps center me and lends a calming presence to my life. I also manage stress. MS has forced me to prioritize what's important and let go of things I can't control. Yoga helps with that, too.

Today I feel great. I just feel very lucky and blessed. I've learned to live a happier, more fulfilling life, MS aside, and I'm grateful for the tools MS brought into my life to do this.

MY STORY DOs AND DON'Ts

DO

“Get a good night's sleep, eat well, and exercise. All are important for anyone, but especially if you have MS.”

DON'T

“Feel obligated to do things. I used to be a people-pleaser. But I have a smaller gas tank now, and I focus on what's important.”

DO

“Look for the silver lining. Repositioning how I look at things has made all the difference to living a grateful life.”

QUIZ

UTI Control

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are one of the most common types of infection. Learn what makes you more likely to get a UTI, and how to prevent it



➔ **Drink Up**
Staying hydrated helps you avoid urinary tract infections.

ASK YOUR DOCTOR

Q How do I know if I have a UTI?

An urge to urinate, burning while you pee, and foul-smelling urine are signs. Pain in your mid-back or fever and chills can mean the infection has moved into your kidneys.

Q How are UTIs diagnosed?

A urine test checks for bacteria that cause UTIs. A urine culture grows bacteria from your urine to help your doctor find the right medicine to treat the infection.

Q Why do I get UTIs so often?

Women are more likely to get UTIs after menopause, and if they're sexually active. Problems or blockages in the urinary tract can also lead to infections.

Q How do you treat UTIs?

Antibiotics are the main treatment to kill the bacteria that cause most UTIs. Many infections clear up in two to three days.

GETTY IMAGES

Quiz

1

I'm female.

- YES
- NO

2

I'm sexually active.

- YES
- NO

3

I have an enlarged prostate (if a man) or a kidney stone.

- YES
- NO

4

I use spermicide and/or a diaphragm (if a woman) for birth control.

- YES
- NO

5

I don't drink much water.

- YES
- NO

6

I wear a catheter.

- YES
- NO

Answers

1. Women develop more UTIs than men because their urethras are shorter and easier for bacteria to sneak into. Wipe from front to back to prevent bacteria from getting in.

2. During sex, bacteria can make their way into the urethra. Urinate right after sex to help flush them out.

3. An enlarged prostate or kidney stone can block urine flow and allow bacteria to grow. Get these conditions treated to help prevent a UTI.

4. Certain types of birth control—like spermicides or a diaphragm—can increase bacteria growth. Don't stop using protection, but consider switching methods.

5. Drink lots of water to make your urine more diluted. The extra fluid helps flush bacteria out of your urinary tract.

6. When you have a catheter placed to drain urine, bacteria can grow in and around it. Use catheters for the shortest possible period of time to prevent infections.

Ziggy Marley

Reggae Artist and Foodie, 48, Los Angeles

1

You recently published the *Ziggy Marley and Family Cookbook*. Tell us about it.

It's a lot of recipes that we got from friends, from my mother-in-law, from all sorts of people we know, from me. It's a real community endeavor.

2

Do you have a favorite recipe in the book?

Everything is really great in there, but my favorite recipe is the coconut dream fish, because I made that up on the fly. It's intuitive cooking. When I finished it, I didn't even taste it before I said, "Oh, that's beautiful. Let me take a picture."

3

Who taught you to cook?

Growing up in Jamaica, I had a great aunt who did a lot of cooking and baking and everything in the house. We used to hang around her in the kitchen and be her tasters, you know. Taste this, taste this, taste that. That's where it all began.

4

How do you like to cook at home?

I'll come into the kitchen, I'm hungry, and I'll create something from what we have, not using specific recipes. I'll mish mash mush up something together. It looks messy, but it tastes good.



5

Has healthy cooking always been important to you?

Growing up, healthy eating wasn't something that we thought about. It was just something that we did. But as we grew older, lots of fast-food options showed up, and you had to start to think: What am I putting into my body?

6

What's the most important meal of the day for you?

Breakfast. Typically what I make

"If the parents eat healthy, the kids will eat healthy."

is the oatmeal recipe that's in the book, loaded with coconut, blueberries, and almond butter. That's my staple breakfast.

7

How do you encourage kids to eat well?

Start as young as possible. Open up their palates and set an example. If the parents eat healthy, the kids will eat healthy. For example, we don't have soda in the house.

8

Do you have any guilty pleasure foods?

Cupcakes! I like coconut cupcakes. And oatmeal raisin cookies.

9

What do you do to stay in shape?

I do everything. I run. I box. I lift weights. My routine's just like my cooking: It's intuitive; it's a lot of different things that I make up as I go because I get bored. I like to work out, but I don't want to stick to any one routine. I want it to be free. I feel really good when I do it that way.

10

Is your cooking at all like your music?

I'm very free-minded in both. I don't like to be in boxes, whether it's music or food.

—MATT McMILLEN