



NAPEBT

HEALTH REPORT

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Sleep Right Every Night

How to get essential rest for your mind and body.

Sleep deprivation has contributed to some of the major industrial disasters of the last century, including the Exxon Valdez oil spill, researchers from Harvard Medical School report. Lack of sleep also contributes to about 1 million car crashes each year, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Lack of sleep frequently factors into workplace errors and accidents in many professions. So, what can you do to keep from becoming a statistic?

First, get a good night's sleep regularly. The human body works best when you sleep the same amount every night, instead of trying to make up for lost sleep with one or two nights of extra shut-eye. Eight hours in bed, resting—if not sleeping—is the average recommendation.

Choosing a normal time to go to bed and get up every day, including weekends, will help your body remember how to sleep properly.

Try these other tips to not only get to sleep, but to stay asleep:

- Create a relaxing bedtime routine for the hour before you turn in.
- Turn your bedroom clock away from you so you can't see the time if you wake up at night.
- Keep your bedroom temperature between 60 and 65 degrees.
- Avoid heavy evening meals, caffeine, tobacco and alcohol, which can interrupt sleep.
- Stick to an exercise routine. If you exercise early, it can help wake you up. If you prefer moving later in the day, do so at least three hours before bed.

WHAT TRIGGERS ALLERGIES?

Warm weather. Longer days. And sneezing. They go together every spring, as pollen and molds wake up and release allergy triggers into the air. The good news: You can avoid the worst symptoms by following these tips at home and—when possible—at work.

- Watch your local weather report or check the pollen and mold counts in your area daily from the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (www.aaaai.org).
- Depending on your job, stay indoors as much as you can when the pollen count is very high, usually in the morning.
- Keep your doors and windows closed. Use an air conditioner. And clean the air filters in your heating and cooling system often.
- When you come home after a day outside, change your clothes and wash your hair to remove pollen you've picked up.
- Vacuum your home and dust surfaces once or twice a week.
- Speak with your doctor about antihistamines, decongestants and eye drops that may help relieve symptoms.



Don't Forget Your Checkup

Spring often brings thoughts of better health. As you're planning activities, don't forget to schedule your annual checkup. Even if you're healthy, this yearly appointment helps your doctor keep accurate records about your overall health and detect potential problems early. And if you're under stress, smoking or gaining weight, your doctor can help you reverse these trends.

Check your health insurance coverage to find out what preventive age- and gender-specific screenings are covered along with your annual checkup. Your doctor might be able to help you schedule them all at the same time.

Is It Restless Legs Syndrome?

Recognize symptoms and find solutions.

If you feel an uncomfortable throbbing, creeping sensation in your legs when you sit or lie down, and it makes you feel like you just have to move around, you might have restless legs syndrome (RLS). This neurological condition affects up to 10 percent of Americans, according to the National Institutes of Health.

More women than men suffer from RLS (almost double!). The discomfort can disrupt sleep and lead to daytime exhaustion. That's especially true if RLS is related to another health condition, such as diabetes or kidney disease. Certain anti-nausea, anti-psychotic and antihistamine medications seem to make symptoms worse. Plus, some women develop RLS late in pregnancy—but the condition usually subsides within a month after delivery.

If you think you might have RLS, ask your doctor about treatment options. Some medications have been shown to relieve symptoms in people with moderate to severe RLS. Lifestyle changes, including reducing the use of alcohol, caffeine and tobacco, improving sleep habits, exercising and taking supplements for important minerals that the body needs, may help those with milder cases.

Meal Planning: Know the Types of Fat

Eating too much fat can be dangerous for your health. As fat builds up in your body, it can lead to high cholesterol, heart disease and other serious health concerns. In fact, if you eat an average diet of 2,000 calories a day, you should only be taking in 65 grams of fat. Make sure you read the nutritional labels on the food you buy and choose healthy fats over unhealthy ones so you can improve your health.

HARMFUL FATS

Solid fats, like margarine, butter, shortening and animal fats, tend to fall into this category.

- **Saturated fat** increases total cholesterol, your risk of cardiovascular disease and your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
- **Trans fats** are usually made during food processing. They include "partially hydrogenated" fats. Trans fats increase your risk

for heart disease by increasing low-density lipoprotein ("bad") cholesterol and lowering high-density lipoprotein ("good") cholesterol.



HEALTHIER FATS

Liquid fats such as olive oil, corn oil and many other types of oil are included in this category.

- **Polyunsaturated fat** is usually found in plant foods and certain types of fish and can decrease your risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes. Omega-3 fatty acids may even help lower blood pressure levels.
- **Monounsaturated fat** comes from various foods and oils. It's been proven to decrease your risk of cardiovascular disease and improve insulin levels and blood sugar control.



4 Ways to Put a Spring in Your Step

Warm weather is right around the corner. And that means it's time to get outdoors for a little exercise. Here are four easy activities to get you started.

WALKING AND JOGGING

Walking and jogging are low-impact activities that take very little preparation. A routine walking program can help you increase good cholesterol and lower bad cholesterol. Other happy side effects include lower blood pressure and better overall mood.

BICYCLING

Even if you haven't ridden a bike since childhood, you can hop on one now for an easy bit of exercise. As you build stamina, you'll improve your heart health and muscle tone. Cycling can also help you burn calories and reduce stress.

GARDENING

You might not think about flowers and vegetables when you think about exercise. However, gardening requires you to use many of the muscles you'd use in the gym, which helps prevent osteoporosis, increases range of motion and improves hand-eye coordination.

BASKETBALL

If you live near a court or have a hoop in your yard, all you need is a basketball to get in a quick workout. A game of one-on-one can torch calories, and even shooting on your own will help you build endurance and muscle while you improve coordination.

Before you begin any new exercise program, talk with your doctor to be sure you're healthy enough for the activity you're considering.

Healthy TEETH, Healthy HEART

If your mouth is in good shape, your heart may be better off, too. That's what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says about the relationship between oral health and heart health.

If you have gingivitis or its more serious form, periodontal disease, the CDC says you may be at higher risk for a heart attack or stroke. Plaque that builds up in your mouth and causes these gum problems can also get into your bloodstream and cause inflammation in your heart and blood vessels.

These steps from the American Dental Association can help you keep your mouth and heart healthy:

1 Brush your teeth twice a day.

Use toothpaste that protects against cavities and gingivitis. Using a battery-powered or rechargeable toothbrush is best, because it lets you clean the front and back of each tooth.

2 Floss daily. Flossing helps strengthen your gums and keep bits of food from getting between your gums and your teeth.

3 See your dentist twice a year.

Having your teeth professionally cleaned and your oral health checked may also help catch other health problems before they affect the rest of your body.

Men's Depression: It's Real and Affects Everyone

In the recent recession and continuing challenging economic environment, three times more men than women lost their jobs as the building trades, construction, manufacturing and other labor-intensive industries were severely affected. As a result, many men developed symptoms of depression. Now, a study reported in the journal *Pediatrics* indicates that

dads' depression affects the whole family, and is also tied to kids' behavioral or emotional problems.

Because dads these days are so involved in their children's lives, their emotions have a strong effect on their kids. Depressed dads are 50 percent less likely to read, sing or play games with their children than non-depressed fathers. But

they're four times more likely to be short-tempered and impatient with their kids.

Keep yourself well to keep your family well. If you think you might be depressed—for example, you feel sad or disinterested in your life for more than a couple of weeks—talk to your doctor. Depression is a real illness that can be treated and overcome.



Tortilla Pizza

270
CALORIES

2g
SATURATED FAT

5mg
CHOLESTEROL

Ingredients:

12 small corn or flour tortillas
Vegetable oil or margarine
1 (16 oz.) can refried beans
1/4 c. chopped onion
2 oz. fresh or canned green chili peppers, diced
6 Tbsp. red taco sauce
3 c. chopped vegetables (broccoli, mushrooms, spinach)
1/2 c. shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
1/2 c. chopped cilantro

Directions:

Recipe makes six small pizzas. Set aside two tortillas for each pizza. For a thicker crust, brush one side of each tortilla with water then press together. Once combined, brush the outside of the six tortillas with a small amount of oil or margarine. Evenly brown both sides in a frying pan. Repeat for all tortillas. Set aside. Heat beans, chopped onion and half diced chili peppers in a medium saucepan. Remove from heat. Spread 1/3 c. bean mixture on each tortilla pizza. Sprinkle on cheese and toppings. Return to frying pan and heat until cheese melts. Top with cilantro. Serves 6.

Get more recipes at www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

Your Favorite Foods, Remixed

You might think that eating healthy means you have to give up your favorite foods. That's not true. You can make the dishes you already enjoy healthier.

For example, when you order a sandwich, replace half the meat and cheese with extra veggies like peppers, tomatoes and lettuce. Or if you enjoy a cheese omelette, which can be full of fat, replace half the cheese with mushrooms or spinach to feel full and reduce calories.

The most important thing is to replace less-healthy foods with healthy ones, instead of adding healthy foods to what you already eat. Otherwise, you'll actually take in more calories.

This *Health Report* is being provided to you by the Northern Arizona Public Employers Benefit Trust and will be posted quarterly to our website. Its purpose is to keep you informed about current health and wellness topics that will help you and your family maintain good health and live healthy lifestyles.

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