

SMART Health

MARCH 2020

EXERCISE: Get More Outdoors

Why exercise with Mother Nature? It's hard to argue with the many health benefits you can gain from regular exercise. And moving it outdoors offers some special benefits over indoor exercise, especially on beautiful sunny days. Let it broaden your horizons.

Just open the door. You'll find countless routes and settings in your neighborhood, often quicker than traveling to a gym.

Forget boredom. You can choose a changing environment, especially if you live near a park, shoreline or designated bike path — much more fun than working on a machine, especially with a friend.

Burn more calories. Headwinds make your muscles work harder to overcome the resistance against your body, especially when jogging or biking.

Connect with your community. Break from screen time to share the fresh air with fellow neighborhood walkers, joggers and bikers.

Make exercise family time outside. Take your kids routinely to a playground, go biking or hiking and break a sweat — a good step in raising confident kids who grow to appreciate fitness.

Boost your mood. There is research suggesting that exercise outside can benefit mental well-being more than the same type of exercise inside. One study found outdoor exercisers scored higher on measures of energy, enthusiasm and self-esteem and lower on tension, depression and fatigue.

Reminder: Know your outdoor environment — find a setting that's safe and meets your exercise needs. Consider traffic, weather and air conditions before heading out.



BEST bits



■ **Every March, Endometriosis Awareness Month is observed across the globe.** Endometriosis affects an estimated 176 million women worldwide, impairing their reproductive system, overall health and livelihood, unless it is diagnosed early enough. Know the signs: If you have painful periods that disrupt work and daily routines, become progressively worse and aren't relieved with nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), see your health care provider for solutions. Learn more at [womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/endometriosis](https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/endometriosis).



■ **National Sleep Awareness Week is March 8 to 14.** It starts on the Sunday when Daylight Saving Time begins — a reminder that sleep is vital to your physical, mental and emotional health. An average of 8 hours of quality sleep daily can improve memory, mood and productivity, boost immunity and help prevent serious health disorders. Consider sleep your No. 1 health priority to make the most of the other 16 hours of your day. Learn more at [sleepfoundation.org](https://www.sleepfoundation.org).



■ **Be wise, and keep your brain alive.** Your lifestyle choices are key to healthy brain function. What you eat and drink, how much you exercise and sleep, the way you socialize and manage stress and how well you follow your health care provider's advice are all key to sustaining brain health. Learn more at [healthybrains.org/pillars/](https://www.healthybrains.org/pillars/). **Brain Awareness Week is March 16 to 22**, uniting worldwide efforts to promote brain education.



Cooking \$MART

Maximize nutrition and ingredients without breaking your budget.

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

“Patience is the secret to good food.”
— Gail Simmons

TIP of the MONTH

Whole Foods for Whole Health

Chalk up another win for whole foods. Researchers have recently found that diets rich in natural whole foods, such as legumes, fruit, vegetables, fish and nuts, are associated with high levels of friendly gut bacteria. This may provide protection for the gut by reducing inflammation and lowering the risk of intestinal diseases such as Crohn's and colitis.



Some foods that are touted for their health benefits can also be expensive. Items such as chia seeds, quinoa and nuts are nutritious but not always affordable. The good news is that you can reap the same nutritional benefits from similar foods that cost much less

Some examples:

Instead of quinoa, opt for oats or pot barley. Either of these options is filled with fiber, vitamins and minerals, and can be used to make anything from a warm breakfast cereal to a savory side dish. Oats and barley cost about half of what you'd pay for quinoa.

Instead of mixed nuts, buy peanuts, which are more affordable. You'll get the same satisfying crunch, plus lots of protein and good-for-you unsaturated fats. The same is true for nut butters: Peanut butter is more affordable than almond or cashew butter.

Instead of chia seeds, choose flax seeds. They cost a third less and are a great source of heart-healthy omega-3 fats.

Instead of ground beef, try brown lentils. Both contain protein, but lentils are cheaper yet higher in fiber and lower in saturated fat compared to ground beef. You can also mix beef and lentils (in burgers, for example) for the best of both worlds.

Instead of pricey dried goji, acai or mulberries, stick with locally grown fresh fruits. Whether you like apples, berries or oranges, they all contain beneficial antioxidants and vitamin C. Any fruit is a good choice.



Instead of pricey snack bars, make your own. See our recipe below.

Instead of buying coffee or tea over the counter, make it at home. A \$3 cup of tea? Buy tea bags instead for only cents per bag. These beverages help you stay hydrated, but the costs add up. Make them at home and tote them in a thermos. And bottle water yourself: Fill a reusable bottle with water from the tap. It costs less and is just as good as what you buy in the store.

Peanut Butter Granola Bars

EASY recipe

- 2 cups rolled oats
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1/2 cup roasted unsalted peanuts
- 3 tbsp honey
- 3/4 cup raisins

Line an 8x8-inch baking pan with parchment paper. **In** a large bowl, mix together oats, peanuts, raisins, peanut butter and honey until it forms 1 cohesive dough. **Transfer** dough into prepared pan and press in firmly, reaching all 4 corners of the pan. **Freeze** for 3 hours or overnight. **Turn** onto a cutting board, peel off parchment paper, and cut into 14 equal-sized bars. **Store** bars in the freezer. **Enjoy** them right out of the freezer (no need to defrost).

Makes 14 bars. Per bar:

159 calories | 6g protein | 8g total fat | 1g saturated fat | 5g mono fat | 2g poly fat | 19g carbohydrate | 7g sugar | 3g fiber | 43mg sodium

How's Your Mental Health?

Just as important as your physical health.

Pessimism, low self-worth, sadness and a general loss of interest — these are signs you may notice following a significant personal setback or unhappy event. But feeling sad and hopeless month after month is depression — a biological disorder and leading cause of disability affecting every age group and more than 16% of Americans. Without addressing it head on, depression can persist for a long time. But it is very treatable. First comes awareness.

Depression, also known as **major depressive disorder** or **clinical depression**, affects the ability to feel, think and handle daily activities.

Classic signs include:

- Feeling hopeless.
- Lack of interest in normal activities.
- Frequent unusual fatigue.
- Oversleeping or insomnia.
- Abusing alcohol or drugs.
- Becoming isolated.
- Thoughts of suicide.
- Recurring headaches or digestive trouble.
- Difficulty with concentration or memory.
- Moving or talking slower so much that others notice.

The severity of depression may be judged by how many symptoms you have and how much they impair your everyday life.

Depression is an equal-opportunity illness, affecting women, men and adolescents. However, each may experience their symptoms differently. It is often overlooked in men and hard to identify in teens.

For example, men may have feelings of anger and aggression rather than sadness. They are less likely than women to recognize, discuss and seek treatment for depression. Yet depression affects a large number of men, and at any age.

Teen depression rates are rising in the U.S., affecting roughly 20% of adolescents by the time they reach adulthood. Detecting it in adolescents can be difficult because typical teen behavior is marked by frequent mood changes. Common signs: excessive sleeping, chronic irritability, poor eating, intoxication with drugs or alcohol, poor school performance, and self-harming behaviors such as cutting.

If your child has symptoms, why not ask your health care provider about your concern? Is it depression, and can it be treated? Antidepressants can be very effective, usually easing the symptoms within 4 to 8 weeks. **Note:** Until your body becomes accustomed to the medication, you may have side effects. Seek counseling and consider joining an online or in-person support group.



And what can you do on your own?

Treat yourself well:

- Boost energy and well-being through exercise.
- Set goals to build confidence in the future.
- Don't hesitate to ask family and friends for help.
- Reflect on things for which you're grateful.
- Spend time with people you like.
- Pursue favorite activities.
- Keep a regular sleep schedule.
- Do helpful things for others.
- Relax, meditate and appreciate nature daily.



And try to simplify your days. We can all feel better leading a less complicated life.

Teens and CREDIT CARDS

If you have children, you want them to develop smart money management skills and grow up to be financially literate adults.

So, when are your teens ready for their own credit cards?

Legally, minors (generally age 18) are not qualified to use credit cards solely in their names. Because your credit will be linked to your teen's account, awareness is key for a positive experience.

Here are a few dos for teens and credit cards:

- ✓ **DO** regularly discuss spending and budgeting. Responsible spending isn't always intuitive.
- ✓ **DO** talk to your teens about how credit works. Teach basic credit concepts.
- ✓ **DO** set spending limits.
- ✓ **DO** regularly check your credit card statements. Stay aware of how much and what your teen is buying.
- ✓ **DO** emphasize that having credit is a privilege and is also a huge responsibility.

As your teens transition from high school to college, be sure to establish a budget for them. Review monthly spending with them to make sure they don't misuse their newfound freedom. Discuss what terms such as APR, balance and interest mean.

Regardless of how you teach your children money management, remember that it is the time you spend with them and your conversations that matter, not the credit card.

IN THE KNOW: Blood Donation



March is Red Cross Month.

Donating blood is safe if you go through the proper channels and follow guidelines. The Red Cross uses new, sterile needles that are discarded after 1 use and uses safe blood collection techniques to prevent infection. While guidelines vary by state, the basic requirements for donating blood are:

1. Being healthy and feeling well.
2. Being at least 16 to 17 years old (varies by state).
3. Weighing at least 110 pounds.
4. Not donating blood within the past 56 days (some exceptions with different types of blood donations).

Search other eligibility requirements at redcrossblood.org.

Most people have little or no reaction to donating blood.

However, call the blood donor center if you have any of the following symptoms after donating, including:

- Nausea, lightheadedness or dizziness after resting, eating and drinking water.
- A raised bump, continued bleeding or pain at the needle-stick site when you remove the bandage.
- Pain or tingling down your arm, into your fingers.
- Fever, headache or sore throat (cold or flu), within 4 days after your blood donation. Bacterial infections can be transmitted by your blood to another person via transfusion, so it's important to contact the blood donor center so that your blood won't be used.



SAFETY corner

Prevent Poison **ABSORPTION**

Accidental poisonings typically involve ingesting pills or chemicals, but poisons can also be absorbed through the skin. The CDC estimates that more than 13 million workers in the U.S. may be exposed to such chemicals through their skin. As a safeguard, be sure to check your Safety Data Sheets (SDS) before working with any chemicals, including cleaning supplies, fertilizers and pesticides.

To prevent skin poisoning:

- Substitute a nontoxic chemical if you can.
- Read your SDS before using any chemical or cleaner.
- Follow OSHA standards and rules.
- Wear protective gear, such as nonabsorbent clothing and gloves. **Caution:** Always check for damage or wear before using protective clothing and replace if necessary.

National Poison Prevention Week is March 20 to 26.



Tween-Ager Anxiety:

How Parents Can Help

Kids are tweens by age 11 or 12 — transitional years from childhood to teenager. Kids often struggle as they experience rapid changes, new emotions and challenges they're not quite ready to handle.

In fact, many of today's kids are living with daily stress and anxiety from an increasingly demanding, complicated society.

Signs for concern: Your tween displays unusual disrespect, emotional outbursts, disobedience or belligerence, or appears depressed, antisocial and isolated from friends and family. At this stage, kids may seek answers or comfort in smoking, substance abuse or extensive screen time.

Cyberbullying is an increasing scenario among tweens and teens that uses digital communication to malign others. Examples: sending hurtful texts or instant messages, posting embarrassing photos or video on social media, and spreading damaging false rumors online or with phones.

The most important thing you can do as a parent is to stay observant and set aside time often to be



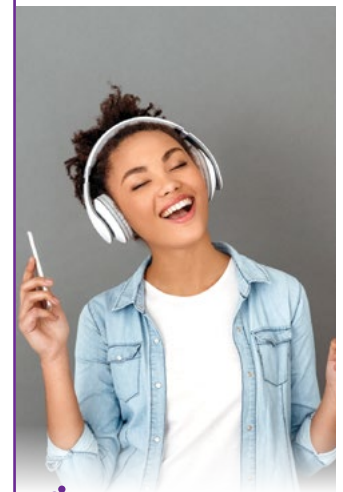
Show your kids that they're in charge of their anxiety; it doesn't have to control them.

with your children. Be persistent; reassure them of your love and support and ability to make life easier, provided they stay connected.

Together, create a plan your kids can use to resolve issues. Example: To combat the effects of cyberbullying, advise your child to actively step away from social media each day and take structured breaks from worries in general to refocus and find ways to enjoy themselves.

“Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.”

— Melody Beattie



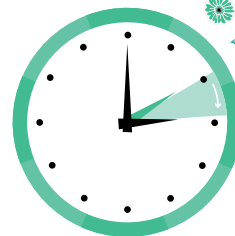
Avoid noise-induced hearing damage while wearing earbuds or headphones. If you're listening to music or podcasts for more than 90 minutes, keep the volume at 60% maximum or less. Keep the volume at 80% of maximum sound for no more than 90 minutes to avoid hearing loss. If you must speak loudly while listening to something, the volume is too high for hearing health, Cleveland Clinic hearing experts warn.

Adjusting to Daylight Saving Time

Springing forward into Daylight Saving Time (DST) isn't as simple as setting clocks forward an hour on March 8. Your body has to adjust. Be aware that DST carries risks. The U.S. Bureau of Labor suggests that workplace accidents increase the work day after DST starts. There is also a higher risk for car accidents when you're sleepy. And cardiovascular research shows people with heart disease are more susceptible to heart attack right after DST due to sleep deprivation stress. In addition, Penn State researchers found that cyberloafing on the job — staring at computers instead of being productive — is common immediately after DST begins.


TIPS FOR ADJUSTING TO DST:

- 1 Prepare to spring ahead.** Go to bed 15 to 20 minutes earlier each night the week before and after DST takes effect. Make sleep a priority now.
- 2 Use light to your advantage.** Exposure to light resets your sleep cycle. Go outside and soak in morning sunlight when possible and sleep in a dark room at bedtime.
- 3 Pay attention to your nighttime routine.** Limit caffeine and alcohol in the hours before bedtime. Don't exercise late at night — it can keep you awake.



“The best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today.”

— H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

 **March 24 is American Diabetes Alert Day.** Nearly 1 in 4 Americans is unaware they have type 2 diabetes caused by high blood glucose levels. Another 84 million have prediabetes, not yet requiring medication. **The good news:** We can often prevent or reverse this life-threatening condition that can lead to cardiovascular disease, heart attack, stroke, nerve damage, kidney disease and vision loss. Primary risks for diabetes include excess weight, family history, inactivity and race (risk is higher for African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and Asian-Americans).

The sooner you identify your risks and control them, the better. To learn if you have risks, take the 60-second type 2 diabetes risk test at diabetes.org/risk-test.



All we have is today.
Just live it.
We don't know
about tomorrow.
So, enjoy the day.
Love yourself, and
spread love around.

— Charlotte Rae

What is Nocturia?

By Elizabeth Smoots, MD

Nocturia is frequent urination at night and only affects nighttime sleepers.

It's defined as waking up more than once while sleeping to go to the bathroom. About 1 in 3 adults older than 30 has nocturia, and the rate increases with age. Nocturia can affect your work and general well-being from frequent sleep disruption.



It's not a disease but a result of lifestyle habits or health conditions. Drinking too much liquid before bedtime is a common cause; caffeinated or alcoholic beverages are often to blame. Diuretics, seizure drugs and other medications can cause nocturia. So can insomnia and sleep apnea. Other health conditions linked to nocturia include overactive bladder, enlarged prostate, reduced bladder capacity, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and menopause.

See your health care provider if you have signs of nocturia. An evaluation can reveal the cause. Treating the underlying condition will often help. Treatment may include taking prescription medicine, physical therapy and often lifestyle changes. For example, reduce fluid intake beginning 2 to 4 hours before bedtime; don't have alcohol, caffeinated beverages such as soft drinks, coffee and tea close to bedtime. And empty your bladder before going to bed.

EXPERT advice

Q: Colon cancer screening?

A: Colorectal cancer is the third-leading cause of cancer deaths in both men and women. The good news is it's often preventable with regular screening. Tests can detect pre-cancerous polyps and lead to their removal before they have a chance to become full-blown cancer. And when cancer has already started, screening can detect it earlier when it's smaller and easier to treat.

But a third of people who should get tested have never been screened.

The American Cancer Society recommends people at average risk start screening at age 45. Screening for colon cancer can easily be done using stool tests that look for blood or DNA changes. Or a health care provider can look inside the colon and rectum using colonoscopy, sigmoidoscopy or CT colonography to detect any polyps or cancer.

Talk to your provider about the best colorectal screening method for you. And ask when you should start.

— Elizabeth Smoots, MD





Patient Safety Awareness Week is March 8 to 14.

Patient Safety 101

U.S. medical care saves and improves countless lives every day.

However, preventable errors do occur. For example, a report from the National Academy of Medicine estimates 5% of adults seeking outpatient care experience a diagnostic error. And the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has estimated 1 in 31 hospitalized patients acquires an infection. And medication errors are not uncommon.

To help prevent clinical mistakes, communication between patients and their health care providers is essential.

That's why the Institute for Healthcare Improvement urges you to take this pledge to become an active member of your health care team:

- ① I'll participate in my care to the best of my ability.
- ② I'll ask questions to become better informed and involved in my care.
- ③ I'll talk with my health care provider about my thoughts, wishes and concerns.

Make sure you have a primary health care provider coordinating your primary care, especially if you have several health problems or when you're hospitalized. Always bring all of your medications and supplements you take to your health care visits.

To learn more, search for **20 Tips To Help Prevent Medical Errors** at ahrq.gov.

EXPERT advice

Q: Mind-body connection and health?

A: Research shows that our thoughts can affect our physical health and our physical condition can affect our mental states, both positively and negatively. Negative beliefs or emotions can trigger reactions ranging from headaches or stomach upset to changes in blood chemistry or illness. Likewise, positive thoughts or attitudes can improve our physical well-being.

To stay as healthy as possible, it's important for us to monitor our moods, thought patterns and overall outlook. Many therapies, including stress management, relaxation techniques and psychotherapy, use the mind-body connection to benefit our overall health. Better awareness can improve conditions such as stress, chronic pain, weight control and substance abuse. Other helpful activities include deep breathing, yoga, massage, meditation, laughter, taking a walk and listening to pleasant music.

Learn more at <https://health.cornell.edu/sites/health/files/pdf-library/mind-body-connection.pdf>.

— Eric Endlich, PhD



March is National Kidney Month, a good

time to get the facts about your kidney health. Kidney disease affects more than 30 million American adults. The earlier you're treated for kidney problems, the better your health outcome. To that end, the National Institutes of Health advises asking your health care provider these questions: How healthy are my kidneys, how often should I get my kidneys checked and what can I do to keep my kidneys healthy? Learn more at kidney.org.

“You don't have to reinvent the wheel every day. Today you will do what you did yesterday, and tomorrow you will do what you did today. Eventually you will get somewhere.”

— Chuck Close



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DR. ZORBA'S corner

We think about vaccines

for kids and seniors, but pregnant women are especially vulnerable to influenza and whooping cough. Only 1 in 3 women gets vaccinated against these illnesses. If you're pregnant, get those shots.



It's important. And while we're on growing that healthy baby, it's important to remember that how healthy you eat and how much you exercise helps you and that baby. Recent research shows more and more that mental health plays a role here. Do things that make you happy and that might also make that baby inside happy, too. — Zorba Paster, MD

March Fill-in-the-Blank Puzzle

Find out how well you know the topics covered in this issue of the newsletter.

- 1 _____ is an increasing scenario among tweens and teens.
- 2 During Daylight Saving Time on March 8, we turn our clocks _____ 1 hour.
- 3 Set volume on your device at _____ or less if you're listening to music or podcasts for more than 90 minutes. (2 words)
- 4 Exposure to _____ resets your sleep cycle.
- 5 _____ cancer is the third-leading cause of cancer deaths in both men and women.
- 6 About 1 in 3 adults older than 30 has _____, and the rate increases with age.
- 7 Nearly 1 in 4 Americans is unaware they have _____ diabetes. (2 words)
- 8 _____ depression rates are rising in the U.S.

Stay in Touch. Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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