

the art of growing young

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Stay Forever Young

with the new

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Skin Care Packs

Life Plus is pleased to introduce to you the all new Forever Young Skin Care Packs. We know that everyone has special skin care needs, which is why we have customized several packs for your convenience.



Forever Young Complete Set

Set Includes:

Purifying Cream Cleanser (Oily or Normal to Dry Skin Formula), Anti-Aging Serum, Eye Firming Gel, Eye Complex and Day/Night Renewal Moisturizer.

Forever Young Cleanse & Protect Pack

Pack Includes:

Purifying Cream Cleanser (Oily or Normal to Dry Skin Formula), Anti-Aging Serum and Eye Complex.



Forever Young Renewal Pack

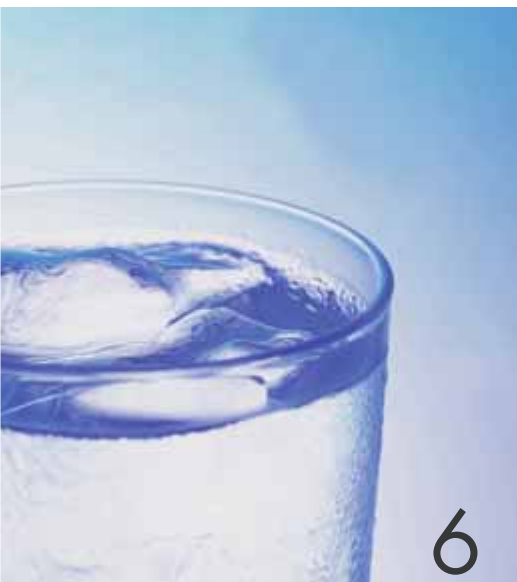
Pack Includes:

Anti-Aging Serum, Eye Complex and Day/Night Renewal Moisturizer.



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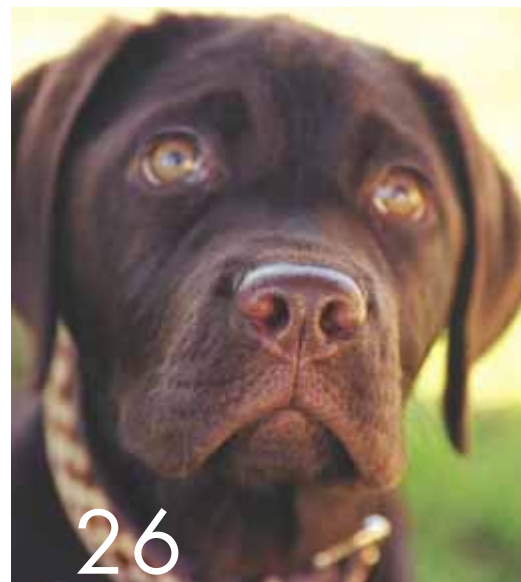
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*This might
be an excellent
time to share
the benefits
of a
healthy
lifestyle with
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grandchildren.*

Welcome to the fourth edition of *The Art of Growing Young*.

Early spring is a special time of year, don't you agree? It's exciting to see the purple crocuses and little snowbells display their first glimpses of color, and the newborn animals romping around in the fields. It's delightful and invigorating, a sign of new beginnings and rebirth!

The sheer beauty spring brings is a welcome sight after the bleak winter months. How lucky we are to see nature at its finest as we venture into the warm sunshine! Along with new buds comes the time-honored tradition of spring cleaning, the perfect time to create healthy lifestyle changes. Several articles in this edition will support you in your endeavors.

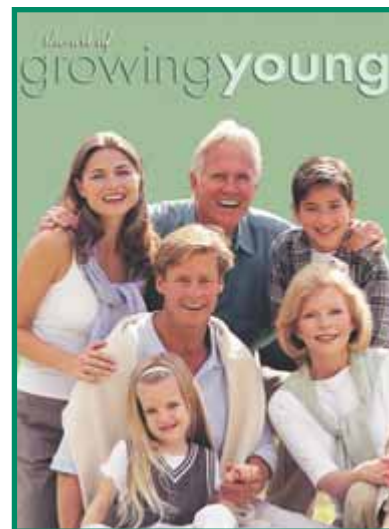
Exercise is one of the best things you can do for your body. Walking would be a good start with a warm sun beating down and the earth bursting with new life. Take deep, cleansing breaths to refresh your lungs. Enjoy the delightful fragrances and eye-catching colors nature offers in the blooms. Take pleasure in knowing that you are doing something wonderful for your body. An article about walking, "Walking, the New Running," is on page 12.

This might be an excellent time to share the benefits of a healthy lifestyle with your children or grandchildren. Take them on walks and enlighten them about the beauty of nature as well as the benefits of physical activity and how to incorporate healthy changes into their lives. Physical activity is the topic of the Children's Health section on page 19.

Lend a helping hand to the spring cleaning process by "cleaning" your body; it's more important than a clean car, yard or house. A nutritious diet containing antioxidants and fiber supports this process naturally. For fiber info, turn to the Herbs and Supplements section on page 8. In addition, "The Substantial World of Phytonutrients" on page 10 and "The Importance of Water" on page 6 will open your mind about the wide, wide world of phytonutrients and the benefits of water. Read the articles and then on a regular basis set aside a few days to eat only fruits and veggies, including a lot of raw ones (or lightly steamed if raw fruits and vegetables don't agree with your GI tract), and drink plenty of good juices, water and herbal teas.

Many people are discovering the warmth and companionship a pet can give. It provides a sense of motivation and influences our health, especially if you're an older adult. Start fresh; renew your emotional well-being by reading "Pets Fetch the Best in People" on page 26. You may decide that by welcoming an eager animal companion into your home or using a furry friend to bring a smile to someone's face, the joy in your life will be uplifting.

Remember: As you incorporate new beginnings into your life, exercise and other changes should be started at a slow pace. You'll be more inclined to keep them—and yourself—around if you do.



Start Young. Stay Young.

The latest in nutritional news



Drug-related expenses have risen by 20 percent in Germany, so if there are no cost-saving measures, the **public health** insurers intend to raise their subscription rates this year, according to a report by the newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Proposals include leaning on general practitioners to prescribe cheaper drugs, and the pharmaceutical industry as well as the pharmacists also doing their bit.

If you are allergic to **dust mites** and suspect that your area rugs make you sneeze and itch, place them outdoors in direct sunlight. For one study, Australian researchers placed mite-infested rugs upside-down on an outdoor concrete surface during a summer day. After four hours, no live mites or eggs survived. Airing rugs and other household items outdoors dries and warms them, a process that kills mites.

Japan has a system of universal **health coverage**, but exactly how it applies to any given person depends on several factors: whether you're working, visiting or a student; your age; and so on. Medical insurance can be divided into two categories: the community-based system of National Health Insurance (kokumin kenkou hoken, or kokuho) and Employees' Health Insurance (shakai kenkou hoken, or shakai hoken). Visit <http://www.japan-zone.com/new/welfare.shtml> if you are moving to Japan or just want more information about Japan, such as culture, food, transportation or employment.

Medical students rarely receive formal training for tobacco cessation techniques, although 90 percent of students interviewed think they should, a new study shows. The survey questioned third-year medical, dental, nursing and pharmacy students in 10 countries. The study found between 87 and 99 percent of the students believed they should have a role in counseling patients to **quit smoking**; however, only 5 to 37 percent of these students had actually received any formal training.

Men and women with heart conditions who drink one glass of **pomegranate juice** daily may support blood flow to their heart, according to researchers from the nonprofit Preventive Medicine Research Institute, University of California, San Francisco, and California Pacific Medical Center. Three months into the study, blood flow to the heart improved in the pomegranate juice group but worsened in the comparison group. Pomegranate juice is rich in polyphenols and other naturally occurring antioxidants.

The Importance of WATER



Imagine being stranded on a desert island and you can have the one thing that you cannot live without. What would it be? A box of matches to build a warm fire? Enough steak and eggs to last until a raft is built? Companionship in the form of Tom Cruise or Beyonce (for witty conversation)?

The answer is crystal clear: It is water. Our survival depends on it.

Water is essential to our bodies. On a daily basis we require water for a number of bodily functions:

- For digestion (to transport nutrients and remove waste products)
- To lubricate body parts (such as the eyes and mouth)
- To cushion joints as a shock absorber
- To maintain blood volume
- To control body temperature

So much in this world is related to nature that it is important to maintain balance with nature. Interestingly, the ratio of sodium to potassium in human blood is exactly the same as it is in ocean water, and the ratio of potassium inside the body's cells to the amount in the blood is nearly identical to the ratio of potassium in the earth's crust relative to the amount in the oceans, says Dwight McKee, MD.

Water is one of the most important nutrients for

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everyone, including children and older adults. It not only keeps us healthy but also may help us to perform better, both physically and mentally. And, as people age, the balance between the need for water and thirst for water shifts—the less water older adults drink, the less thirsty they become, leaving them open to the risk of serious dehydration and other complications.

Thirst is a poor indicator of dehydration. By the time we get thirsty, it may be too late—and we may reach

for a beverage that doesn't replenish the body, such as soda pop, coffee, tea or alcohol. Sometimes we confuse thirst with hunger; we think our body is asking for food, but what it really wants is water.

We might not drink enough water if we're in the habit of drinking iced or refrigerated water, Dr. McKee says. Drinking water at a temperature of less than 40 degrees Fahrenheit (4.44 degrees Celsius) slows its absorption from the stomach and upper intestine; the body has to warm the water more than 60 degrees (15 degrees Celsius) to get it up to body temperature before it takes it into the bloodstream. He recommends drinking water at room temperature. When water is consumed at room temperature or slightly above, it is able to move from the GI tract into the bloodstream much more rapidly, allowing the consumption of larger quantities of water over a

shorter period of time.

The quality of water is another important factor to consider. He says most tap water is disinfected with chlorine or other chemicals that can be potent oxidants that kill bacteria and viruses but may be damaging to our bodies. This practice has helped to dramatically reduce the incidence of waterborne infectious diseases. But the problem with drinking chlorinated tap water is that residual chlorine and its by-products such as chloramines can also kill the beneficial bacteria that live in our intestines as well as increase oxidative stress (free radicals) in our bloodstream, placing a greater demand on the body's antioxidant reserves. That's why the demand for bottled water and water filtration systems has increased.

It's a good habit to drink water throughout the day whether we feel thirsty or not. But how much water should we drink? Recommendations vary:

- In Australia, an accredited practicing dietitian-nutritionist at Sydney's Lidcombe Hospital recommends drinking two liters of water a day and increasing this amount from a half liter to one liter in humid weather.
- In Britain, the British Dietetic Association guidelines state that an average adult should consume two and one half liters of water per day and increase the intake during hot weather or during and after physical activity.
- In Canada, two to three liters of fluid each day is recommended. More water is necessary when eating large amounts of salt, sugar, fiber or protein; when the environment is hot and/or humid; and when we are physically active.
- In Ireland, www.irishhealth.com suggests that each adult drink at least one pint of water a day in addition to the water derived from all other sources, including fruits and vegetables, milk, juices, soups and soft drinks.

- In Japan, the average person drinks 12 liters of mineral water a year besides regular water consumption. Water containing vanadium (said to support low blood sugar levels) is very popular, and water containing silicon (said to support low cholesterol) is on the rise.
- In the United States, the Institute of Medicine recommends that men consume three liters of total beverages a day and women consume 2.2 liters.

Dr. McKee believes that a trial of drinking six pints of water daily for several months can tell you whether any of your health problems may have been related to chronic dehydration. His recommendation is that you drink according to the following schedule:

- One pint of water immediately upon waking
- One pint of water shortly before breakfast
- One pint of water shortly before lunch
- One pint of water shortly before dinner
- Two pints of water throughout the course of daily exercise routine

"If the problems were related to dehydration, you'll be a confirmed water addict for life," he says. "If a few months of such increased water intake make no difference to how you feel or function, you can rest assured that you've been getting enough water."

Your body may require more than average amounts of water when you are

- more physically active,
 - on a high-protein or high-fiber diet,
 - having diarrhea or vomiting,
 - exposed to hot or humid conditions, or
 - pregnant or breastfeeding (consult your physician about how much water you should be drinking).
- Drinking enough pure, clean water—along with regular exercise; a diet of whole, natural foods; high-quality food supplements; some form of regular stress management practice such as biofeedback, yoga, tai chi, prayer or meditation—is one of the best possible investments you can make in your health and quality of life. ■



FIBER

The Simple Way to Keep Your Body Healthy

By Buddy Garrett

What can you do to be as healthy as a horse? Eat some hay.

Whoa, Nellie! While that may not sound as appetizing as a steak and baked potato, there is some horse sense logic about it. Hay is fiber and fiber is good for you. But you don't have to shove Nellie away from the horse trough to get your share of fiber. Humans get their fiber from cereals, nuts and fruits, and the taste is much better than what Nellie is chewing.

What is fiber?

Dietary fiber ingredients are always plant derived and categorized as soluble or insoluble. Soluble fibers dissolve in water and consist of pectin, gums and some polysaccharides, which form a gel in the upper intestine. This gel helps decrease appetite and can make controlling hunger easier. Insoluble fibers (the term "dietary fiber" refers to carbohydrates that cannot be digested) absorb very little water and ease bowel movements as they provide bulk. The body needs both types of fiber in the diet. Sources of foods high in fiber include bran, whole wheat, and some fruits and vegetables.

Fiber's health benefits

Fiber plays an important role in promoting overall health, as well as potentially lowering the risk for several chronic diseases. Most foods that contain significant amounts of fiber are often low in fat and calories when compared to other foods.

Studies suggest that a high-fiber diet may help control blood-sugar levels. In a ten-year Harvard study completed in 1994, men and women who ate high-fiber breads had fewer heart attacks and strokes than those

whose tastes ran to bagels and baguettes (made from refined flour with no fiber content).

Simply switching from white to whole wheat bread can lower heart disease risk by 20 percent according to research from the University of Washington, reported in the April 2, 2003 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

How the body digests food

Digestion begins the moment you smell, see and taste food—or even think about it for that matter. The olfactory nerves kick into high gear the moment food odors are detected. Many people wake up smiling to the smell of coffee brewing or bacon sizzling in a frying pan. Once you start anticipating the foods you are about to eat, the digestive juices prepare for the main course. When the food enters the mouth, saliva mixes with it and makes it easier to swallow. This also starts the breakdown of starches into simple sugars. As you swallow, the food is carried to the stomach where the enzymes pepsin and trypsin and hydrochloric acid break down the food so it can be further digested by the pancreatic enzymes in the small intestine. Fiber helps "scrub" the digestive tract and move the food being digested along its path as well as helping to cleanse.

In general, nutrition experts recommend that adults eat between 20 to 35 grams of fiber daily. Try these simple recommendations to boost your intake:

- Familiarize yourself with the fiber content of foods by checking the nutrition facts on labels.
- For breakfast, consider a high-fiber cereal with five grams or more per serving.

- Use a whole-fruit spread on your toast instead of butter.
- Eat fewer processed foods and more fresh foods.
- Cut back on meat servings and substitute with various kinds of beans, nuts and grains.
- Use whole-wheat, artichoke or spinach pasta instead of the white flour kind.
- For a snack, eat popcorn rather than commercially processed snacks like chips. Flavor it with powdered garlic, lemon and pepper, or even good-tasting salad seasonings.
- Use frozen melon balls instead of ice in your fruit drinks. They add fiber and extra flavor.
- By replacing calorie-laden foods with items containing more fiber and water, you will feel just as full while taking in significantly fewer calories.

Exotic sources of fiber

The fiber you eat does not need to taste bland. The whole world is an abundant source of rich-tasting fruits and other fiber-producing foods.

- **Coconut.** Very common in Polynesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, India and northern Australia, coconuts are a sweet treat high in fiber. Coconut milk is often given to babies as a substitute for cows' milk.
- **Quandong.** This Australian native plant has a bright red glossy fruit that tastes like a cross between a peach and an apricot. Quandong is often used in jams or served as a dessert. Incidentally, quandong contains about six times the amount of vitamin C found in oranges.
- **Nuts.** Pistachios, pecans, hazelnuts, walnuts, and especially almonds. The whole world loves German roasted nuts. An interesting fact, according to BuyUSA, is that Germany does not produce significant quantities of these nuts. Instead, a number of U.S. firms export nuts to Germany. In 2003, U.S. total exports of tree nuts to Germany were valued at \$205 million (U.S. dollars). America might supply the nuts, but it is the old-world Bavarian recipes that bring out the flavor.
- **Endive.** The Belgian white version is high in fiber and is tastier than the red version commonly found in America. This leafy vegetable is the foundation of many salads and goes well with most other ingredients.

The trend toward whole grain products

If bread is truly the staff of life, the flour from which it is made must stand up to public demand to feed the masses and look good. The smooth, easy-to-chew consistency of white bread, along with its clean-looking image, has long been the main choice for making the best sandwiches. There seems to be a strong dislike for the dark and seedy slices of bread which are considered healthy but oh, so...old fashioned. Whole grain is what your grandpa and grandma eat.

Old habits are hard to break, so white bread remains king of the sandwich pile. Ah, but wait! There is some help on the rise for those needing to adjust their diets. ConAgra Foods, Inc., one of North America's largest packaged food companies serving consumer retailers, restaurants and other foodservice establishments worldwide, recently began marketing a near-white whole wheat flour with a taste and bread texture similar to refined white flour. The feedback, they say, has been outstanding.

You might always seem to be in a horse race these days, and the lines at the grocery store may be growing longer, but take time to choose bread that is made from whole wheat and add more fruit and fiber to your diet, and try something exotic like Australian quandong. You'll be doing yourself a favor.

Our digestive systems were designed to consume fiber and lots of it. By consuming a diet rich in fresh fruits, grains, legumes and vegetables, you can be assured of getting a goodly amount of it. There has been a significant amount of research in recent years demonstrating numerous health-supporting benefits of fiber. Don't overlook this important nutritional factor in your diet. ■



The substantial world of

PHYTONUTRIENTS

Even though mom didn't know phytonutrients were there, she knew we were to eat them. How many times did your mom or grandma say, "Eat your fruits and vegetables, they'll help you grow up big and strong," or "Eat your carrots, they're good for your eyes?"

This could be thought of as just information that was passed down from generation to generation by caring moms. However, as time moves on and we learn more about the cellular makeup of our bodies and the chemistry of food content, we realize more and more that there are valid scientific reasons for this "motherly" advice.

We hear so much today about phytonutrients—those valuable substances found in the fruits and vegetables we are supposed to eat—that it almost seems like a broken record to hear it again. Yet it is important we understand that we must have them to be healthy! They are obscure, are present in small amounts and can have profound positive effects on your health.

The term "phyto" is used in botany and herbal science to describe substances contained in plants. So phytonutrients are substances occurring in plants (foods and herbs) that have nutritional value.

For instance, allyl sulfides contained in garlic and onion support already-healthy cholesterol levels and colon and stomach health; capsaicin in chili peppers promotes healthy joints; polyphenols in green and black teas promote a healthy heart and circulation. Carotenes in orange, yellow and dark green fruits and

vegetables promote immune function, while bioflavonoids and oligomeric proanthocyanidins (OPCs) in red wine and grapes, blueberries and other fruits protect cardiovascular health and support collagen structure in the whole body.

There are thousands of different phytonutrients and they are important in a wide variety of health-supporting activities. Some phytonutrients are categorized as enzymes, enzyme activators, inhibitors or even coenzymes. Others are classified as phytosterols or one of many important metabolites. One thing is sure they are synergistic with—and supportive of—many of the known essential vitamins and other nutrients in your body.

All categories are important, but one of the most exciting and important is the category known as antioxidants. Antioxidants have received more attention from researchers than any other category of phytonutrients.

Antioxidants help protect your cells from free radicals, which result from metabolism and occur in the air we breathe, in the water we drink and in the food we eat. Many food additives and other synthetic compounds act as free radicals. They are all around us and are actually "oxidants" or "oxidizing agents," which means they aid oxidation. An example is an apple turning brown after it is cut. Oxygen and other oxidants cause destruction of the apple's components. If you apply lemon juice to the apple, the browning is slowed because the vitamin C in the lemon juice acts as an antioxidant protecting the components contained in the apple.

Antioxidants help the body protect critical structural and functional components such as proteins, DNA and lipids throughout the whole body. One primary area of interest is the antioxidant protection provided to collagen, the most common structural protein in your body. By protecting collagen levels, antioxidants support the cartilage in your joints and skin. This helps to maintain healthy thickness and elasticity of your skin and other connective tissues, including those in your arteries, bones and muscles.

Many vitamins, minerals, trace elements and other substances can all act as antioxidant protectors as well as perform their other nutritional functions in metabolism. A good example is vitamin C with its multiple roles in the production of energy, the maintenance of structural collagen and the support

of immune function—and it is also an antioxidant.


The importance of phytonutrient antioxidants cannot be stressed enough—such as OPCs from grape seeds and pine bark; curcuminoids from turmeric; lycopene from tomatoes; lutein from many fruits and vegetables; quercetin from apples; and other phytonutrients contained in herbal sources such as green tea, ginkgo biloba, ginseng, rosemary, hawthorn berries, milk thistle, cayenne, red clover and rose hips, to name a few.

These are components of those fruits and vegetables that our mothers and grandmothers told us to eat. Now today we see researchers scientifically documenting what our mothers knew intuitively years ago. So remember to eat those fresh fruits and veggies as often as you can to stay healthy. ■



Finally, a safe low-abrasive toothpaste that cleans teeth and gums gently while delivering all the health benefits associated with Tea Tree Oil. Available with or without fluoride, this alcohol-free toothpaste will leave your mouth feeling minty fresh.





fitness

Walking THE NEW Running

Good Health, Just Steps Away

By Jessica Crenshaw

Walking should be as much a part of everyday life as sleeping, breathing or eating. We walk from the moment we wake each day—a thoughtless action that is just natural. Did you know that walking 10,000 steps a day could lead to a healthier life? How many steps do you take in a day?

Easy as A-B-C

Easier on the joints than jogging, fitness walking has gained popularity since the aerobic '80s and step-intensive '90s. Walking for fitness is not only an easy way to maintain health, it's also one of the most convenient and affordable methods of exercise. Fitness walking is popular largely because of its simplicity—all you need is a good pair of shoes and a little time.

Accessibility

Consider walking to work. If you live close enough, you can squeeze in a workout on your way to and from work. If walking to work isn't an option for you, think about taking half an hour of your lunch break to walk a little. Ask friends to join in—you might even start your own lunchtime walking club with others in your place of work. If you prefer quiet solitude, a morning walk around your neighborhood might be a better fit. Consider walking when you have the most energy—morning for some people and evening for others. The wonderful thing about fitness walking is that you can customize your exercise routine to fit your own schedule.

Budget-Friendly

You don't have to pay hefty gym fees to benefit from walking. You don't have to fuss with heavy machinery, and you don't have to keep track of any confusing aerobic routine. There are no classes or personal instructors to pay. Compared to other forms of exercise, walking is certainly one of the most affordable. However, to begin a fitness-walking regimen, you will need a good pair of shoes. Think of your shoes as an investment, and buy the right pair to help prevent injury and keep you comfortable. Look for shoes that are specifically designed for exercise—all running shoes, cross-trainers and walking shoes should be well cushioned and supportive. Try on several pairs of walking shoes to determine which feels best. If you have friends who fitness-walk ask for a personal recommendation or ask for help at your local shoe store. Once you know what kind of shoe you'd like, take care to choose the right size. Getting the right size shoe is just as important as getting a shoe with good support. Shoes should fit according to your gait, stride and weight.

Comfort

In fitness walking you are your own instructor and you can step up the pace whenever you feel comfortable. It's important to know how much you need to walk in order to benefit. It takes about 2,000 steps to walk one mile. On average, most people walk about two to three miles per day, but the actual total depends upon how active a person is. So if the

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How to Choose the Right-Sized Walking Shoe

- Bring the socks you like to wear when you walk while trying on shoes.
- The right size for walking shoes can be a half size larger than your dress shoes.
- Try on shoes late in the day or right after walking, so your feet will be at their largest point for the day.
- Very important: Shoes should feel great when you put them on; don't buy them thinking you will "break them in."
- If you have wide or narrow feet, look for a brand that has various widths.
- If any part of your foot rubs against the shoe, try another pair or style so you will decrease the risk of developing blisters at the beginning of your fitness journey.

Good Health One Step at a Time

According to the Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, walking for fitness has many important health benefits. You can:

- Reduce your risk of a heart attack. Walking keeps your heart healthy by lowering low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol (the "bad" cholesterol) and raising high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol (the "good" cholesterol).
- Reduce high blood pressure. A regular walking program also reduces the risk of developing high blood pressure. If you already have high blood pressure, walking can help reduce it.
- Reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Regular exercise reduces your risk of developing type 2 diabetes. If you're female, overweight and a high risk for diabetes, walking can improve your body's ability to process sugar.
- Manage your diabetes. If you already have type 2 diabetes, taking part in a regular walking program can improve your body's ability to process sugar, lower your blood sugar, reduce your risk of heart disease and help you live longer.
- Manage your weight. Walking burns calories, which can help you manage your weight. For example, middle-aged women who walk more than 10,000 steps a day have lower levels of body fat than do women who are less active.
- Manage stress and lift your mood. Going for a brisk walk is a great way to reduce stress, and regular walking can also reduce feelings of depression and anxiety.
- Stay strong and active. As you get older, walking for physical fitness can prevent falls, help you stay mobile and maintain your independence.

women's health



Heart

MATTERS

By Patti Stewart

The American Heart Association reports that cardiovascular disease accounted for more than 53 percent of deaths in women in the United States in 2001, making it the number one cause of death in women. Because it has been considered mostly a man's disease, women's heart health has only recently begun being addressed.

Women may not always have the classic symptoms of a heart attack, such as left arm pain and the feeling that an "elephant is sitting on" her chest. Their symptoms may be vaguer, such as unusual fatigue, sleep disturbances, shortness of breath, indigestion or anxiety. Since women have taken a more active role in the workplace while simultaneously attempting to maintain their obligations to their families, they are placing themselves under more emotional and physical stress. Therefore, it is even more vital that they pay attention to their heart health today than ever before.

Some good news is that many of the risk factors for heart disease can be removed with a few lifestyle changes. A study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* says the mortality rate for heart disease has been on the decline in the last 30 years mainly because of preventative education and better treatments.

An unhealthy heart can leave you short of breath and feeling tired. It can cause poor circulation and cause the lungs and other organs to be damaged from lack of good oxygenated blood. It can be a source of clots that can be released into the bloodstream, which

cause further damage. Diseased arteries and veins can affect heart function. They must be able to carry blood efficiently to the heart to receive oxygen and away from the heart to supply your organs with oxygen-rich blood. Valves between the chambers can be diseased or defective and prevent the blood from flowing as it should. If the chambers are enlarged and sluggish, they will not pump the blood out properly. If the blood sits in the chambers too long, clots can develop. If an organ does not get sufficient healthy blood, it cannot function properly. Therefore, it is essential to do all we can to maintain a healthy heart.

The heart, like any other organ in the body, is affected by overall health. Heart health requires active participation in preventative

measures especially involving lifestyle changes. It is very important to exercise regularly. It is sometimes easier to incorporate exercise into your daily routine if you are doing something you enjoy, such as gardening, bicycling or walking.

New research from Yale University School of Medicine shows that people who practice stress management techniques, such as stretching exercises and purposeful relaxation at least three times a week may benefit from a reduction in blood pressure, heart rate and risk of heart disease. Surround yourself with positive energy and things that bring you joy. What you fill your life and mind with may help determine whether you have balance and harmony or chaos and stress.

continued on page 30

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The Truth About GUM DISEASE

Dental diseases, including cavities and gum disease, are the most common diseases besides the common cold to affect people!

With the addition of fluoride to many municipal water supplies and toothpaste, dental caries (cavity formation) has virtually become a problem of the past for many people. Although fluoridation of public water supplies remains a controversial issue, there is strong evidence that topical application of fluoride strengthens tooth enamel and reduces its vulnerability to cavity formation.



take to reduce tooth loss from periodontal disease.

Risk Factors

An estimated 80 percent of American adults currently have some form of periodontal disease, according to the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. Other expert groups state even a higher percentage.

Up to 30 percent may place the blame on heredity, says the American Academy of

Periodontology (<http://www.perio.org/>). The academy reports that untreated gingivitis (an early-stage gum disease that is very common) can lead to more advanced periodontal disease. Other factors that may put you at an increased risk include your age, gender, nutrition, medications, tobacco use, osteoporosis, hormonal changes and poor dental care.

Stress can foster the advancement of periodontal disease and can make it more difficult to control, says the academy. A recent study found that high levels of financial stress and poor coping abilities increase twofold the likelihood of developing periodontal disease as well as other diseases.

Pregnant women may want to include a periodontal evaluation as part of their prenatal care since researchers have found that periodontal treatment significantly reduces the risk of having a

Define Periodontal

Periodontal diseases are chronic bacterial infections that affect the gums and bone supporting the teeth. Actually, the word periodontal means “around the tooth.” This disease is among the most common chronic disorders that have plagued humans for centuries. In fact, the ancient writings of Egyptian and Chinese scholars describe in great detail afflictions of the periodontal structures and how to treat them, according to the Harvard School of Dental Medicine in Boston.

Early in the twentieth century, periodontal disease was thought to be inevitable, and the loss of teeth resulting from it was considered part of the aging process. Now we know there are many steps you can

preterm birth or a low-birth-weight infant, according to a 2005 study published in the *Journal of Periodontology*.

Health Concerns

Studies in the last decade have brought to light that it's not just your teeth that gum disease can affect.

An association was found to exist between oral infection and systemic diseases, particularly heart disease and stroke, diabetes and preterm low-birth-weight babies, among others, as reported in the December issue of *Inside Dentistry* magazine. Ties were also made to pneumonia, respiratory diseases and osteoporosis.

Signs and Symptoms

Healthy gums are pink. The gum line should hug the teeth tightly and there should be no bleeding. But our mouths are full of bacteria. These bacteria combined with mucus and dietary sugars form a colorless, sticky substance, commonly referred to as plaque, on teeth. If this plaque is not removed on a regular basis, it can harden and form bacteria-harboring tartar (also called calculus) that regular brushing just doesn't remove. The longer this plaque remains on your teeth, the more harmful it can become. It can contain harmful bacteria, which can lead to inflammation of the gums, otherwise known as gingivitis.

Even though only a dentist can determine the degree of involvement and the need for professional treatment, there are signs and symptoms of gingivitis and more advanced periodontitis you may want to keep an eye out for.

Gingivitis is a condition in which these symptoms may exist:

- Gums bleed easily when you brush or when probed gently during examination.
- Gums are inflamed and sensitive to touch.
- Bad breath and bad taste are possible.
- Gums between teeth may look bluish-red in color.

Early periodontitis is a condition in which these symptoms may exist:

- Gums may begin to pull away from the teeth.
- Bleeding, puffiness and inflammation may be more pronounced.
- Bad breath and bad taste may be present.
- There may be slight loss of bone, shown horizontally on X-ray.
- There may be pockets of 3 to 4 mm between teeth and gums in one or more areas of the mouth.



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CHILDREN OF ALL AGES NEED TO BE

ACTIVE

By John Riddle

According to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, nearly half of the children in the United States are not vigorously active on a regular basis.

Over the past decade, children have been spending more time watching television, playing video games, and using their computers, which is contributing to an increase in body weight and an overall unhealthy lifestyle. And although many of those children are enrolled in physical education classes at school and maybe even participate in team sports, they still may not be getting enough exercise.

Regular physical activity for children of all ages is important, and as most parents know, kids love to be active when they are young. They enjoy moving

their bodies and seem to have a nonstop supply of energy. But the trick for parents is to foster and encourage the love of exercise and activities that can reap the physical, emotional and social benefits of regular exercise as their children grow older.

"It is very important for children of all ages to have regular physical activity each day," says Dr. Mary Gavin, medical editor for KidsHealth.org, a division of The Nemours Foundation, a Delaware nonprofit organization devoted to children's health.

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Evening Primrose Oil

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- Evening Primrose Oil may provide important benefits to women of all ages, including women experiencing PMS or menopause that have specific nutritional interests.
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- Evening Primrose Oil contains Essential Fatty Acids that help maintain healthy looking skin.



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children's health

“Regular physical activity allows children to build strong muscles and bones, maintain a healthy body weight, decrease the risks of certain diseases (such as type 2 diabetes), and also helps them to have a better outlook on life.”

Childhood and adolescence may thus be pivotal times for preventing sedentary behavior by maintaining the habit of physical activity throughout the school years, and for later years in adult life. School-based exercise programs have been shown to be successful in increasing physical activity levels. With evidence that success in this arena is possible, every effort

should be made to encourage schools to require daily physical education in each grade and to promote physical activities that can be enjoyed throughout life.

Children learn from watching their parents, so one of the first things parents need to do is to set a good example. “Parents can encourage their children to be active by being good role models,” says Dr. Gavin. “Once you start becoming active yourself, your children will want to copy your behavior and be active themselves.”

A child who has active parents is six times more likely to be physically active. Once you help your child to view exercise and physical activity as fun, you are more likely to get your message across.

Here are some ideas to help you encourage physical fitness in your children:

- Encourage free play among younger children—In this age group children love to have the opportunity to play games that involve movement, dance, walking, running, kicking and jumping.

Another way to get your children moving is to get them away from the television, video games and the computer.



- Encourage involvement in organized sports—Although many organized sports activities are for school-aged children, there are some programs designed for younger kids. Doctors are encouraging children as young as six to join a team or enroll in a class that will teach them physical fitness skills, and social interaction as well.

- Encourage family active time—As a parent, find a time that fits everyone's schedule and start a family activity that involves exercise and fitness. This doesn't mean that you have to take the

family on a twenty-mile hike, but you can do some fun activities, such as biking, baseball, swimming or some other type of outdoor play. Ask everyone to name their favorite activity, and take turns so that everyone has an opportunity to participate.

Another way to get your children moving is to get them away from the television, video games and the computer. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, the average child is watching about three hours of television a day, and the Kaiser Family Foundation reports that children are spending about five and a half hours a day on electronic media activities. It doesn't mean that they have to go “cold turkey” and give them up forever, but you should limit the time spent on those activities.

If you and your children have been living a sedentary lifestyle, remember that it is never too late to change. Old habits can be broken, and once you make the decision to improve your health and engage in physical fitness and activities, you will be on the road to a healthier and happier life. ■



SLEEP

Nature's way of recharging your batteries

By Buddy Garrett

“To sleep, perchance to dream—ay, there’s the rub.” Shakespeare’s Hamlet may have dreamt about getting an eternal good night’s sleep, but many people who suffer from sleepless nights find their condition to be (or not to be) a real nightmare.

Normally speaking, the human body requires about eight hours of shutdown time. Think about the body as a finely tuned race car at Le Mans about halfway through the race. Your machine is purring like a kitten and the tires spin around the curves like a cheetah sniffing high-octane catnip. You’re in the lead and you don’t want to stop. The professional in you knows that the car’s endurance is only as sound as the tune-ups it receives, so you pull out and let the pit crew juice up the tank, change the tires, whatever it takes to get you back on track strong enough to take the checkered flag.

That’s the same way you have to tune the body. You’re in the driver’s seat. Run long and hard and you’ll eventually have to make a pit stop. The right food, the right amount of exercise and a new coat of wax at a local health spa might make you look great. But do you feel great? If you’re not cruising along on all cylinders, your body’s tachometer may be working harder and harder while you get farther and farther behind.

Stop! Hit the brakes—at least long enough to hit the sack and grab a few hours of z-time.

If you don’t recharge your batteries you could end up blowing a gasket and losing the race—that being whatever goal you have set for yourself. And it doesn’t have to be physical. Lack of sleep takes its toll on the body, but it also robs you of your mental faculties. Try taking a college math test when you’ve been up and running for 72 hours straight. Add some everyday stress to that and you’ll find your nuts and bolts are starting to come loose. Ignore the warning signs and the air in your tires will ooze out slowly, leaving you with that flat feeling. In short, if you don’t program yourself for a regular night’s sleep your body will simply close down by itself and there you will be on the dance floor feeling flatter than a flitter while your dance partner thinks about trading you in for a newer model.

Maybe you are one of the lucky ones who do not have a problem getting to sleep at night. That’s great. As you get older, though, the body changes. Be prepared to modify your sleeping habits if you notice a problem. On the other hand, if you are looking a little rusted out around the eyeballs and maybe your dents and scratches are starting to show, you might want



to take stock of how many hours you stay on the go. Late-night parties can be fun, but what's your body telling you about that? Too many oompah bands and beer steins and "you're not getting any younger" looks from your loved ones should be a yellow flag telling you it's time to reevaluate your track record.

Knowing some of the health problems surrounding sleep and the lack of it is your green light toward restoring your vitality. According to the U.S. National Sleep Organization, more than 100,000 traffic accidents in America each year result from drivers falling asleep at the wheel. In Australia, an estimated 770,000 people suffer from excessive daytime sleepiness. Neuroscientists at Australia's Monash University found that about 5 percent of adults in Britain and 9 percent in Germany suffered at least three attacks of daytime sleepiness a week. The numbers were much lower in countries where people take an afternoon siesta. Italy, Spain and Portugal, for example, registered only about 1 percent.

Sleep inhibitors

There can be many reasons why you are not getting enough sleep. Medical conditions such as diabetes and sleep apnea, sleep disorders such as insomnia, narcolepsy, mental stress, and dietary conditions such as having too much caffeine in your system can all add up to a sleepless night.

Age is also a factor in how much sleep you get. A new Gallup survey released recently by the International Longevity Center-USA shows that 46 percent of older adults receive fewer than seven hours of sleep each night. That estimation takes into consideration that older adults experience grogginess and long-term side effects resulting from prescription sleep medications.

"The importance of sleep to healthy aging is often overlooked in the medical community," says Dr. Robert N. Butler, the Longevity Center's president and chief executive officer. He was quoted in the Gallup survey saying, "Poor sleep is a condition that needs to be addressed, diagnosed, and treated—it could be as important as nutrition, exercise and social engagement to the health of older adults."

More recently, the London Daily Mail reported that a new clinical trial in Germany using a skin patch containing the drug lisuride—used to treat Parkinson's disease—might also ease restless legs syndrome, a common neurological disorder. Its symptoms can include unpleasant sensations such as burning, creeping, or tugging in the legs, which causes the legs to twitch or jerk during needful rest periods. The paper reported that "as many as five million people have the condition," but only one in ten receive treatment.

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fitness

average person walks two to three miles that accounts for about 4,000 to 6,000 steps. Therefore the average person will only need to cover another 4,000 steps in a day with a brisk pace to reach 10,000—that's only a 30-minute walk. If you lead a fairly inactive life it's best not to delve into a 10,000 daily step goal. If you spend most of your time behind a desk or the wheel of a vehicle, you should adjust the goal down. Determine how many steps you take in a day by wearing a pedometer. They are not expensive and are available from many different sources. If your daily average is 3,000 steps, then you might try to take extra steps until you reach a goal that you are comfortable with. Studies show that taking 10,000 steps equals about five miles of walking and is approximately the right amount of daily physical activity that has been shown to support a healthy lifestyle. ■



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men's health

Overcoming the problems

Going to bed sooner won't always guarantee that you're getting more rest. Snuggling under the covers without a sound to disturb you can be...boring. Try as you might, you cannot force sleep upon yourself. But you can do some things that will help your body ease into that dreamy state where it starts to recharge itself.

Physical relaxation before going to bed is a good start. Hot baths, massages and deep breathing are high on the list of ways to relax. The best way to relax may be—no joking—for you and your partner to engage in a vigorous round of sexual activity (adults only, please). Some 47 percent of Americans polled recently said they have sex before going to sleep. A Bedtime in America survey reported that having sex helps people fall asleep—it was the second most popular sleep aid for 75 percent of the men surveyed, but only 11 percent of female respondents said it was their favorite activity before falling asleep. No wonder wives complain about husbands who snore.

Mental preparedness is another way to overcome sleeplessness. One medical researcher suggests that you use your bed only for sex and sleep. Avoid using the bed to work, budget your bills, or plan activities. Do all your work before going to bed. Relax by counting sheep or doing the mental exercises popular among some “mind-control” advocates—such as “seeing” yourself sinking into your mattress, or visualizing your body as if you were Pinocchio and disjointed at the wrists, elbows, knees, etc.

Soft music or such sounds as ocean waves, whale songs, or natural forest animals are recommended for relaxation. Late night heavy meals should be avoided. If you like late-night television, you might want to avoid horror shows and the nightly news.

However you choose to relax, make it a habit. One thing sleep researchers all seem to agree upon is that the body will respond to repeated actions. Create good sleep habits and you better your chances of getting the rest you need to get your life back on track. And whatever you do...sweet dreams! ■

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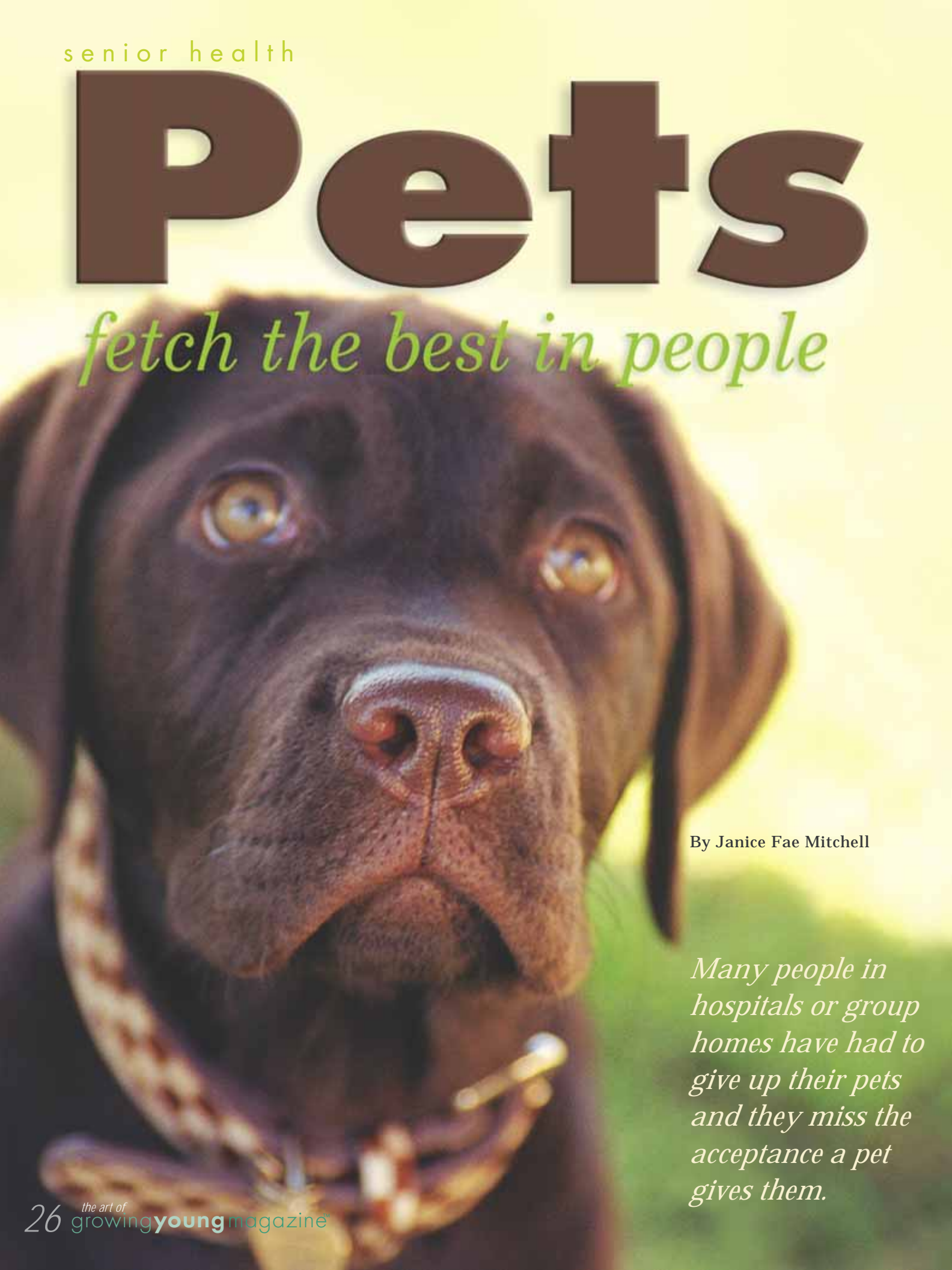


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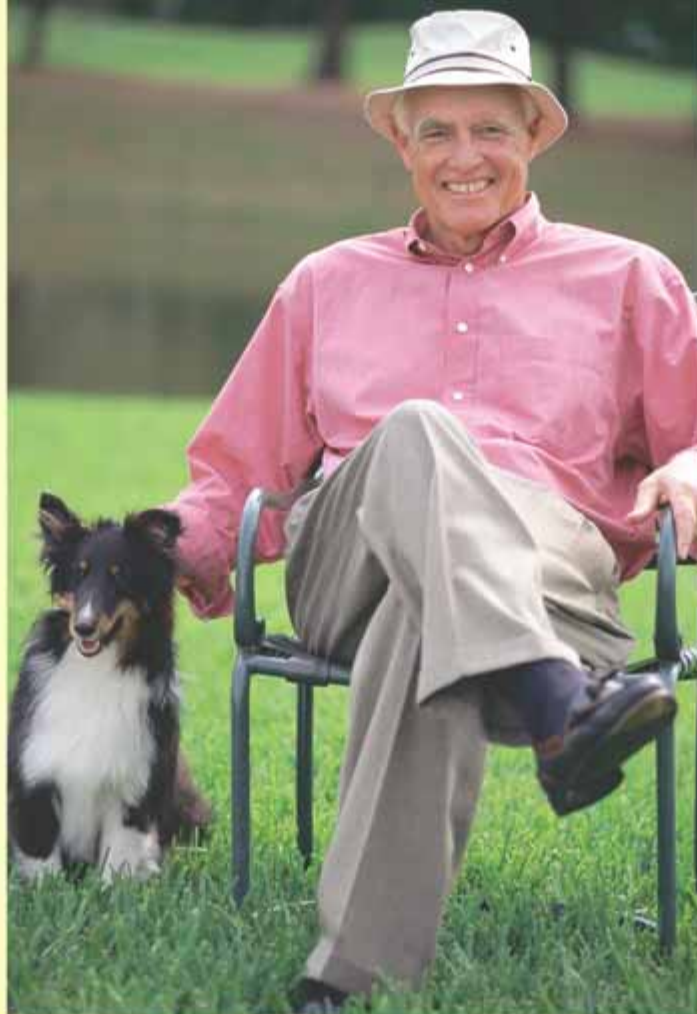
senior health

Pets

fetch the best in people

By Janice Fae Mitchell

Many people in hospitals or group homes have had to give up their pets and they miss the acceptance a pet gives them.



Service animals trained to assist people with disabilities were not allowed in many public places 20 years ago, but the Delta Society and other like-minded organizations have changed all that—along with the “fetching” concept of how therapeutic animals can be.

For years we’ve known that being greeted by a happy and loving pet when you wake up in the morning or come home from work can be inspiring. Now many people are discovering that feeling the warmth and companionship of an animal when you’re in a nursing home or hospital provides a sense of motivation and influences your health, especially if you’re an older adult.

“Animals are fun to be with and comforting to hold,” journalist Odean Cusack says. “Their antics inspire humor and a sense of carefreeness, a return to childhood with its buoyant spirits. Caring for pets encourages nurturance, responsibility and adherence to a daily schedule. Pets live in the immediate moment, and interacting with them makes us keenly aware of the present with all its joys.”

The Delta Society (www.deltasociety.org), based in Bellevue, Washington, is a leading international resource for the bond between animals and humans.

It promotes many programs, such as the Pet Partners Program, which trains and screens volunteers and their pets for visiting animal programs in hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers and other facilities.

The golden touch of animals is being used to benefit the elderly through visiting or live-in pets in hospitals and nursing homes, and a program that helps elderly people look after their pets in their own homes. Many people in hospitals or group homes have had to give up their pets and they miss the acceptance a pet gives them.

A study reveals that medication costs dropped in nursing homes that allowed pets, and about half of the psychiatrists, psychologists and family practice physicians responding to a survey reported that they have prescribed pets for their patients.

Research is proving that pet ownership and animal visits have many more perks. People become more active and responsive both during and after visits. A visiting animal can offer entertainment or a welcome distraction from pain and infirmity—people often talk to the animal and share their

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senior health

thoughts, feelings and memories. It has been scientifically proven that stroking an animal can reduce a person's blood pressure, and petting encourages use of hands and arms, stretching and turning.

Animals make it easier for two strangers to talk; it gives them a common interest and provides a focus for conversation. An animal pays little attention to age or physical ability but accepts people as they are. The benefits continue even after the visit. The visit leaves behind memories not only of the visit, but also of past experiences, and offers something for people to share and something for them to look forward to.

Having a pet around can give you a sense of protection, encourage physical activity and promote social interaction with neighbors. The responsibilities and daily rituals of the care of a pet provide a touchstone of reality, divert one's cares and troubles, and are socially acceptable conversation pieces and opportunities for touching. Pets also serve as a "clock," providing a sense of order, and can give a realistic baseline against which we can sometimes put our own lives into perspective.

People around the world are starting to catch pet fever. After scientific research indicated that owning a dog or cat—or even a parrot or goldfish—is good in all sorts of ways, a pilot health care program was launched in the United Kingdom. The National Health Service provides budgets for patients to acquire a pet when it is agreed it may assist recovery from an illness such as depression. It has been found that having a dog promotes exercise and social interaction. Dr. Joanne Righetti—an animal behavior consultant in the U.K.—says caring for a pet has scientifically been proven to support functions of the heart, wellness and recovery from surgery.

Australia claims to have one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the world: 64 percent of the households own pets. The Petcare Information and Advisory Service (<http://www.petnet.com.au>) reports that pet owners reap more health benefits than people without pets do, in that they typically visit the doctor less often, deal better with situations that are stressful and are less likely to report feeling friendless. Animal Assisted Therapy Australia



(www.therapydogs.org.au/) provides services and trained assistance dogs to people with disabilities and the caregivers, as well as to professionals who work in the disability and health care fields.

Older adults in hospitals, convalescent homes and retirement facilities in Fremont, California, are true believers in pet therapy—and the power of a hug. Volunteers and their companion animals in the Ohlone Humane Society Hug-A-Pet program visit these facilities on a monthly basis for "hug" therapy. Studies have shown that visits of this nature have a positive effect on the emotional and physical health and rehabilitation of people, and the animals also enjoy the extra attention and socialization.

When you get home today, give your pet a hug. It will love it, I promise you! And if you have spare time on your hands, take it a step further—locate your local Delta Society or humane society and volunteer to help others benefit from the love an animal can provide. ■

More pet-related Web sites:

<http://www.pethealth.com.au/>

<http://dogplay.com>

<http://www.dogpark.com/>

<http://www.pettravel.com/> (international)

<http://www.petfriendly.ca/>

<http://www.tiergestuetzte-altentherapie.de> (German language)

<http://www.lebenshilfe-bbg.de> (German language)



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A balanced diet rich in fresh fruits, vegetables and lean meats will help maintain a healthy weight. The diet should also be low in saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol. All these things combined will assist in achieving good health. If the heart is already damaged from disease, you can still benefit from healthful lifestyle changes to prevent further damage and improve your quality of life.

It is also important to breathe. This seems like a simple thing, but healthy lungs also play a large part in heart health. Anything that helps maintain healthy lungs will also benefit the heart and circulation. According to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, women who smoke are two to six times more likely to suffer a heart attack than are nonsmoking women. Women must make good choices and try to encourage younger women, by example, to do the same.

Studies show that women are more prone to heart disease after menopause due to a decrease in estrogen production. It is even more important for women to maintain good health at this stage of life. If a woman develops good habits in her younger years, this transition will be easier and have less of an impact on overall health. A sedentary lifestyle is very unhealthy at any stage of life. But as women age, it is even more important to remain active. Fresh air, exercise, good nutrition, emotional well-being and a joyful attitude are all important factors in maintaining a healthy heart. ■

Moderate periodontitis is a condition in which these symptoms may exist:

- Gum abscesses may develop.
- Teeth look longer as gums begin to recede.
- Front teeth may begin to drift, showing spaces.
- Bad breath and bad taste may be present.
- Both horizontal and angular bone loss may be indicated on X-ray.
- Pockets between teeth and gum range from 4 to 6 mm deep.

Advanced periodontitis is a condition in which these symptoms may exist:

- Teeth may become mobile or loose.
- Bad breath and bad taste are constant.
- Roots may be exposed and are sensitive to hot and cold.
- Severe horizontal and angular bone loss shows on X-ray.
- Pockets between teeth and gum are now in excess of 6 mm deep.

Steps You Can Take

Health and lifestyle changes that can decrease the risk of developing gum disease include

- daily oral hygiene habits such as brushing and flossing to remove plaque;
- professional examinations and cleanings at least twice a year;
- a well-balanced diet that includes fruits and vegetables and adequate vitamin D, from sun or supplemental sources;
- a decrease in stress level; and
- quitting smoking.

You should be even more cautious if you are wearing orthodontic appliances (braces). Proper daily cleaning under and around them is one of the most effective things you can do to prevent the buildup of plaque-containing bacteria, which can cause tooth decay, gum inflammation and even bone loss.

The Surgeon General's report *Oral Health in America* provides important reminders that oral health means more than sound teeth. It is important to overall health. Furthermore, safe and effective measures exist that everyone can adopt to improve oral health and support teeth and gums. For more information on that report, visit the Web site at www.surgeongeneral.gov. ■

Bottled or tap, potato skin, elastic skin and the one-two punch for regularity...

Is it better to drink bottled water than to drink tap water?

Probably, but not necessarily. Most bottled waters have at least the “worst” of the bad tastes removed, which means that some of their contaminants have been removed. However, many contaminants are tasteless and, even at low levels, may be toxic. The requirements for bottled water are almost identical to those set by the Environmental Protection Agency for tap water. So be cautious. For more information, you can contact the International Bottled Water Association at 800-WATER-11 (800-928-3711) or visit www.bottledwater.org for a list of affiliated manufacturers.

Why should I eat my potato skins?

Skins contain more B vitamins, iron, potassium and fiber. Make sure the potato is washed thoroughly, and avoid the skin if it has a green tinge. Green color may indicate undesirable levels of solanine, a naturally occurring toxin which may cause cramps, diarrhea and fatigue. You may consider taking a nutritional supplement to block some of the empty starch calories in potatoes and other starchy vegetables.

Does skin lose elasticity as you age?

Yes. Facial skin typically looks its best while a person is in the 20s. As you age, your skin becomes thinner and often drier. Thinning skin is a result of a breakdown of collagen and elastin fibers. The good news is that there are a number of lifestyle and dietary changes that you can make to help keep your skin healthy, vibrant and more youthful looking. Skin is actually the largest organ in the body, and it's the body's first defense against infection and other invasion. The skin helps regulate body temperature and prevent excess fluid loss, and it also helps your body remove excess water, salt and other toxins. Treat it as if you want it to last a lifetime.

What can I do to relieve constipation without using harsh stimulants?

The best way to support colon function we know of is a consistent, one-two punch—include lots of fiber in your diet and drink plenty of liquids, especially water. Fiber does not come from meats and fish; it is found in vegetables, fruits and hulls of grains. Stalky vegetables such as broccoli are also good.

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