

Friendships Foster Good Health



Adult friendships create meaningful social connections. More than ever since COVID-19, we've seen firsthand the impacts of loneliness and social isolation on people. Staying connected through adult friendships can help us overcome any negative impact of aging.

In fact, research has shown that having close friends may help add years to your life. One study suggested that those with a larger social network had lower mortality at a 10-year follow-up than those with a smaller social network.

Specifically, adults with strong social connections were shown to have a reduced risk of significant health problems, including depression, high blood pressure and an unhealthy body mass index. And of course, companionship can also improve your self-confidence and reduce stress.

However, the 2021 American Perspectives Survey found that Americans report having fewer close friendships than they once did. The good news is that it's more about quality than quantity.

Maintaining friendships as a busy adult can be challenging at times. To connect well with other people, it helps to be yourself and be available to friends by making your relationships a priority. To nurture friendship, make time for those you care about. Be present by connecting regularly. Show up for your friends, especially when it could matter the most to them.

Be the friend you want to have, and lead with kindness and compassion. You can show your trust as a friend by sharing and asking for help when the time comes.



March is Nutrition Month.



Dietitian's Grocery List

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD



It's easier to prepare nutritious meals and snacks when you plan them in advance. An important first step in planning is grocery shopping for the right ingredients and properly stocking your fridge, freezer and pantry.

Some people create a meal plan and know what they will cook each night. Others prefer to rely on a well-stocked kitchen so they can prepare meals in a pinch. If you prefer the latter, this grocery list should keep you supplied for delicious last-minute meals.

Pantry:

- Canned beans and lentils
- Canned fish
- Brown rice
- Assorted noodles: pasta, rice noodles, etc.
- Whole grains, such as quinoa and oats
- Nuts and seeds
- Peanut butter
- Canned tomatoes and tomato sauce
- Whole-grain crackers

Fridge:

- Milk or non-dairy alternative
- Eggs
- Greek yogurt
- Cheese
- Salad greens (spinach, romaine, kale, etc.)
- Vegetables: broccoli, carrots, sweet peppers, etc.
- Fruits: apples, berries, melons, etc.
- Condiments: mayonnaise, mustard, soy sauce, etc.

Freezer:

- Frozen vegetables, such as peas, broccoli and stir-fry mix
- Frozen fruit, such as peaches, mango and berries
- Chicken
- Fish and seafood, such as salmon and shrimp

Countertop:

- Bread, pita and tortillas
- Fruits and vegetables kept at room temperature: tomatoes, avocado, bananas, etc.

Dark cupboard:

- Onions
- Potatoes and sweet potatoes
- Garlic

Staples to have on hand:

- Extra-virgin olive oil or other cooking oils
- Vinegar (cider, rice, balsamic)
- Favorite dried herbs and spices
- Salt and pepper

You can mix and match the foods from this shopping list to make delicious meal combinations, such as:

- Shrimp stir-fry: Frozen stir-fry vegetables, shrimp, noodles.
- Chicken dinner: Chicken, broccoli, leafy greens, quinoa.
- Pasta bake: Pasta, tomato sauce, canned chickpeas, cheese.
- Vegetable fried rice: Eggs, brown rice, frozen peas, carrots.
- PB and banana roll-ups: Peanut butter, banana, tortilla or pita.



Daylight Saving Time and Your Health



Daylight saving time (DST) impacts your body's natural rhythms. And the result can be far more than feeling extra sleepy after setting your clock forward an hour on March 10. The reason? The shift in time disrupts the body's natural rhythms.

Proponents of DST assumed it would make better use of more daylight in spring and summer and more sunlight exposure would boost moods. But research shows DST is associated with psychological disturbances, weight gain, increases in heart attacks and strokes and even more car crashes.

Daylight saving time can affect your health because of how the time change impacts circadian rhythm: the body's natural 24-hour biological cycle, set by the timing and daily amount of bright light exposure. During DST, which lasts until early November, your body gets less light in the morning and more light in the evening, which can disrupt your circadian rhythm.

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine and other sleep experts advise eliminating DST, but they've been unsuccessful.

However, these tips may help you fare better during daylight saving time:

- For one to two days leading up to the switch to DST, get outside in the morning. More natural morning light can help preserve your circadian rhythm.
- The night before DST begins, go to bed one hour earlier than normal to prepare. Avoid caffeine, alcohol and blue light exposure one to two hours before bedtime.
- Exercise in the morning can increase wakefulness. It helps reset your internal clock, too.

Stay Informed About Your Medications

By Elizabeth Smoots, MD

Information about prescription and over-the-counter medications changes over time. It's important to keep up with new warnings, side effects, interactions or recalls for the drugs you take. These tools can help you stay informed.

MedWatch is published by the FDA and provides safety alerts for FDA-regulated products, such as prescription and over-the-counter drugs, medical devices, cosmetics, food and beverages. To learn more, search for **MedWatch** at [fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov).

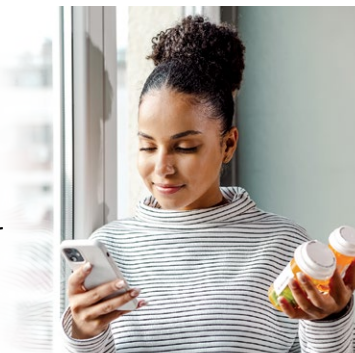
The FDA safety checker is a searchable database for drug recalls, market withdrawals and safety alerts at [fda.gov/safety/recalls-market-withdrawals-safety-alerts](https://www.fda.gov/safety/recalls-market-withdrawals-safety-alerts).

MedlinePlus offers a wide range of information about medications, herbs and supplements at [medlineplus.gov](https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus).

Drugs.com provides access to FDA updates and new drug approvals. It also has a pill identifier, a side effect checker and a checker for interactions with drugs, foods and diseases.

Your health care provider and pharmacist are reliable sources of current information about medications.

Medication tip: It's important to avoid taking more than one medication with the same ingredient. For instance, many cold remedies contain acetaminophen. If you take more than one of these cold products, you may exceed the maximum recommended acetaminophen dose; this can lead to liver damage. Check the list of ingredients on the label for every medication you use.



Benefits of Weighted Gloves

Weighted gloves build strength and stamina and tone arms.

Lifting dumbbells and working out with resistance machines aren't new, but using weighted gloves can be a more convenient and less complicated way to add weight training to your fitness quest.

Previously, mainly boxers have used heavy, weighted gloves when they work out with punching bags. Now anyone can choose from a wide variety of gloves with small weights at sporting goods stores and online.

Weighted gloves for exercise typically have pocket-type holders on the backs which hold the weights (usually ½ to 1 pound for beginners and up to 4 pounds for the more fit). Some come with several different weights so you can add or subtract the amount from the gloves. It's important to make sure the gloves have secure but comfortable straps, too.

So, if you're not a boxer, what can you do with weighted gloves? Boosting your walking routine while carrying the extra weight is one of the easiest activities. You'll burn more calories. The gloves also add extra resistance to strengthen your upper body. Walking regularly with weighted gloves can strengthen bone density, reducing the risk of osteoporosis, too. You can also increase cardiovascular fitness and build stamina.

If gloves aren't for you, try wearing weights on your ankles and wrists. While all can help fitness if used safely, talk to your health care provider before you use any wearable weights if you have back, joint, or balance problems or other chronic conditions.



The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **Eating Plan for Life**, is at personalbest.com/extras/24V3tools.

3.2024

MAKE A GREAT PLATE.

Cinnamon adds warmth and comfort to this classic.

Creamy Rice Pudding

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup long-grain brown rice
- 4 cups 1% milk, divided
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- ½ cup fresh blueberries

DIRECTIONS

In a medium pot, add rice, 3 cups milk, cinnamon, vanilla and maple syrup. **Bring** to a boil. **Turn** heat to low, cover and simmer 45 minutes. **Stir** in remaining 1 cup milk, cover and simmer 15-20 minutes or until creamy. **Top** with blueberries and serve.

Makes 8 servings. Per serving: 156 calories | 6g protein | 2g total fat | 1g saturated fat | 1g mono fat | 0g poly fat | 29g carbohydrate | 4g sugar | 1g fiber | 64mg sodium



Vegetable Bean Soup with Quinoa

EASY | RECIPE

Ingredients:

1 tbsp **extra-virgin olive oil**
1 **onion**, chopped
3 **garlic cloves**, chopped
2 **carrots**, diced
2 stalks **celery**, diced
1 **zucchini**, diced
1 can (28 oz.) **crushed tomatoes**
1 can (15 oz.) no-salt-added **mixed beans**,
drained

3 cups **chopped kale**
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup **quinoa**
8 cups **water**
1 tsp **salt**, or more to taste
1 cup fresh chopped **basil**
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup freshly shredded
Parmesan cheese



Method:

Add oil to a large pot set over medium heat. **Add** onion, garlic, carrot and celery, and stir to combine. **Cook** about 5 to 7 minutes. **Add** zucchini, tomatoes, beans, kale, quinoa, water and salt. **Stir** together and let cook about 15 minutes, until quinoa and vegetables are tender. **Season** with salt to taste. **Add** to bowls, and top with basil and Parmesan. **Serve** hot.

Makes 6 servings. Per serving:

208 calories | 11g protein | 5g total fat | 1g saturated fat | 3g mono fat | 1g poly fat |
35g carbohydrate | 6g sugar | 9g fiber | 478mg sodium

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BEST bits



Save Your Vision Month in March is a reminder to take care of your vision.

As life becomes more digital, staring at a screen for prolonged periods can cause eye strain. Schedule regular eye exams and take precautions to protect your eyes. A recent survey found that the average American spends at least seven hours a day using electronic devices; constant, unrelieved use can cause eye strain and dry eyes, as well as disturb our sleep patterns. **Practice the 20-20-20 rule:** After 20 minutes of staring at a screen, look away toward an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds.

Severe weather doesn't end with winter.

As we transition from snow and cold to sunshine and warmth, try to be prepared in advance for wild weather that may frequent your area, including tornadoes, heavy rain, lightning and damaging winds. When outdoors, wear layers of warm, wet-proof clothing. Learn more at [weather.gov/ind/preparedness](https://www.weather.gov/ind/preparedness). To find weather and safety events in your state, check the NWS Weather and Water Preparedness Events Calendar at [weather.gov/safety/events_calendar](https://www.weather.gov/safety/events_calendar).

Do you need 10,000 steps a day? People younger than 60 should try to walk 8,000 to 10,000 steps a day to achieve maximum fitness benefits that support life expectancy and cardiovascular health. Fitness tracking devices often advise taking 10,000 steps a day, but taking far fewer can still be beneficial, according to the Harvard School of Public Health. If you're older than 60, you may achieve a healthy benefit between 6,000 and 8,000 steps.



More than 5.3 million Americans are living with brain injuries.

Young people between the ages of 15 and 24, children under age five, and adults older than age 75 sustain the most brain injuries in the U.S. The Brain Injury Association of America is putting a spotlight during **Brain Injury Awareness Month** on the importance of preventing brain injuries where possible. It's also an opportunity to learn about brain injury survivors' individual experiences and to help find ways to improve their care. To learn more, go to [biausa.org/brain-injury](https://www.biausa.org/brain-injury).

How's Your Sleep?



The quality of your sleep affects your mood, health and work. Sleep Awareness Week, from March 10 to 16, was started 26 years ago by the National Sleep Foundation (NSF) to encourage people to think about the importance of their snooze time and to take action if they aren't getting adequate, restful sleep.

Studies have mounted over the decades showing sleeping enough — and sleeping soundly — is linked to better physical and mental health, including a stronger immune system and less depression, according to the NSF. And not getting enough shut-eye raises the risk of accidents and lowers productivity, too.

Not getting enough sleep creates sleep debt. Eventually, your body will demand that the debt be repaid. If you are burning the candle at both ends, there's a good chance you're deep in debt.

If you wake up not feeling rested, the NSF offers these strategies to help improve your sleep:

- ➔ **Don't** skimp on shut-eye. Adults need seven to nine hours of sleep each night. It's important to keep to a regular sleep schedule, including the weekends.
- ➔ **Exercise** regularly. You don't want to do a vigorous activity right before bedtime, but regular low-impact fitness activities, such as walking or swimming, are helpful for improving sleep quality.
- ➔ **Say** no to large, heavy meals late at night. A light dinner about two to three hours before bedtime is best for digestion and sleep.

- ➔ **Unwind** before sleep by taking a relaxing bath, reading, or listening to soothing music.
- ➔ **Make** sure your bedroom is sleep-friendly. Turn off your phone and any other devices an hour before bed. Keep your bedroom dark (invest in light blocking curtains or shades, if needed).
- ➔ **If** you wake up still tired, it's important to find out why, and take action. You may have an undiagnosed but treatable health problem, such as sleep apnea. Schedule a checkup with your health care provider.

Are you getting enough sleep?

Check the statements below that apply:

- I have trouble falling asleep.
- I have too much on my mind to fall asleep or go back to sleep.
- I need more than 30 minutes to fall asleep.
- I can't go back to sleep when I wake up during normal bedtime.
- I wake up too early.
- I feel tired upon waking, despite apparent normal sleep.
- I awaken frequently during sleep time.
- I have uncontrolled episodes of falling asleep during the day.

How much sleep do you need?

It depends on your age and circumstances. The NSF recommends the following:

Adults age 18 and older	7 to 9 hours
Teens	8 to 10 hours
Children 6 to 12 years old	9 to 12 hours
Preschoolers	10 to 13 hours, including naps
3 to 5 years old	11 to 14 hours, including naps
Toddlers 1 to 3 years	12 to 16 hours, including naps
Infants 1 to 12 months	12 to 16 hours, including naps

You may need more or less sleep, depending on your health and lifestyle. For example, if you have the flu or COVID, getting extra sleep is essential for your recovery.

How did you do?

If you experience two or more of these situations regularly, you may have developed a problematic sleep pattern — one that may be interfering with your health and safety. Read on for some sleep-friendly tips that can help you get more shut-eye.



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If gloves aren't for you, try wearing weights on your ankles and wrists. While all can help fitness if used safely, talk to your health care provider before you use any wearable weights if you have back, joint, or balance problems or other chronic conditions.

Don't fall for FOMO. Fear of missing out is a form of social anxiety. It's the perception (often inaccurate) fueled by social media that others are having more fun, are more popular, or are more successful than you. We're not all prone to FOMO, according to Washington State University (WSU) researchers studying FOMO. However, loneliness or low self-esteem can fuel it. To reduce or avoid FOMO, the WSU team advises self-compassion. Focus on the present, real moment. Use social media less or cut it off altogether for a while and lessen loneliness by engaging more with coworkers and real-life friends.



TIP of the MONTH

Hyper-Palatable Foods

Many popular ultra-processed snacks were created by food companies once owned by tobacco conglomerates, which are well-known for creating addictive cigarettes. These companies added the perfect amount of salt, sugar or fat (the bliss point) to make foods hyper-palatable, so people would crave and eat more of them. A new study found that food products owned by tobacco companies between 1988 and 2001 were 80% more likely to contain hyper-palatable combinations of carbs and sodium compared to other foods. Think before you eat; keep in mind what's in the manufactured foods you consume. Have a single portion of your favorite snack and save the rest for another occasion, rather than overeating.

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By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

eating smart



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Some people create a meal plan and know what they will cook each night. Others prefer to rely on a well-stocked kitchen so they can prepare meals in a pinch. If you prefer the latter, this grocery list should keep you supplied for delicious last-minute meals.

Pantry:

- Canned beans and lentils
- Canned fish
- Brown rice
- Assorted noodles: pasta, rice noodles, etc.
- Whole grains, such as quinoa and oats
- Nuts and seeds
- Peanut butter
- Canned tomatoes and tomato sauce
- Whole-grain crackers

Fridge:

- Milk or non-dairy alternative
- Eggs
- Greek yogurt

Cheese

- Cheese
- Salad greens: spinach, romaine, kale, etc.
- Vegetables: broccoli, carrots, sweet peppers, etc.
- Fruits: apples, berries, melons, etc.
- Condiments: mayonnaise, mustard, soy sauce, etc.

Freezer:

- Frozen vegetables, such as peas, broccoli and stir-fry mix
- Frozen fruit, such as peaches, mango and berries
- Chicken
- Fish and seafood, such as salmon and shrimp

Countertop:

- Bread, pita and tortillas
- Fruits and vegetables kept at room temperature: tomatoes, avocado, bananas, etc.

Dark cupboard:

- Onions
- Potatoes and sweet potatoes
- Garlic

Staples to have on hand:

- Extra-virgin olive oil or other cooking oils
- Vinegar (cider, rice, balsamic)
- Salt and pepper
- Favorite dried herbs and spices

You can mix and match the foods from this shopping list to make delicious meal combinations, such as:

- **Shrimp stir-fry:** Frozen stir-fry vegetables, shrimp, noodles.
- **Chicken dinner:** Chicken, broccoli, leafy greens, quinoa.
- **Pasta bake:** Pasta, tomato sauce, canned chickpeas, cheese.
- **Vegetable fried rice:** Eggs, brown rice, frozen peas, carrots.
- **PB and banana roll-ups:** Peanut butter, banana, tortilla or pita.



Egg and Vegetable Fried Rice

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, <i>divided</i> | 2 cloves garlic, minced |
| 6 eggs, whisked | 4 cups cooked and cooled brown rice |
| 2 medium carrots, peeled and diced | 3 green onions, thinly sliced |
| 1 onion, diced | 3 tbsp sodium-reduced soy sauce |
| 1 cup frozen shelled edamame | 1 tsp toasted sesame oil |
| 1 cup frozen peas | |

Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in large pan over medium heat. **Add** egg, scramble until cooked and remove to a plate. **Add** remaining olive oil, then add carrots, onion, edamame, peas and garlic. **Sauté** 6-7 minutes until onion and carrots soften. **Add** cooked rice, green onions and soy sauce. **Stir** to combine and cook about 3 minutes to heat rice through. **Add** eggs and sesame oil. **Stir** to combine and serve warm.

Makes 4 servings. Per serving: 410 calories | 19g protein | 17g total fat | 4g saturated fat | 8g mono fat | 4g poly fat | 48g carbohydrate | 5g sugar (0g added sugar) | 6g fiber | 523mg sodium

EASY recipe



Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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There's mixed news about colorectal cancer.



The good news is regular screenings and removal of precancerous polyps have lowered rates of colorectal cancer in older Americans. But unfortunately, more people age 45 and younger are being diagnosed with the disease. **Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month** in March is a reminder to contact your health care provider about screening options if you are age 45 or older. No matter your age, share your personal and family health history with your provider. You may need colorectal cancer screenings before age 45 or more frequently than normal if you have a family history of the disease.

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Proponents of DST assumed it would make better use of more daylight in spring and summer and more sunlight exposure would boost moods. But research shows DST is associated with psychological disturbances, weight gain, increases in heart attacks and strokes and even more car crashes.

Daylight saving time can affect your health because of how the time change impacts circadian rhythm: the body's natural 24-hour biological cycle, set by the timing and daily amount of bright light exposure. During DST, which lasts until early November, your body gets less light in the morning and more light in the evening, which can disrupt your circadian rhythm

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- The night before DST begins, go to bed one hour earlier than normal to prepare. Avoid caffeine, alcohol and blue light exposure one to two hours before bedtime.
- Exercise in the morning can increase wakefulness. It helps reset your internal clock, too.



Extend Your Ladder Knowledge

Ladder safety is basic — place the ladder on stable, even ground; inspect the ladder before use; keep three points of contact when ascending and descending the ladder; never carry tools or other objects in your hands while using a ladder and wear shoes that grip.

However, there are extra guidelines for extension ladders:

Read specific manufacturer's instructions regarding extension ladders — there are different guidelines for special situations.

Ensure that you don't place an extension ladder upside down.

Don't exceed the load rating of your ladder. Remember to include the weight of tools, materials and equipment.

Set the ladder at the proper angle. For example, when leaning a ladder against a wall, the bottom of the ladder should be one-quarter of the ladder's working, extended length away from the wall.

Use extra care when getting off and on the ladder. Avoid tipping the ladder sideways or causing the base to slide off.



Don't step or stand higher than the step label that marks the highest standing level.

Always extend the ladder three feet above the landing when accessing an elevated work surface.

Never use an extension ladder horizontally like a platform.

Egg and Vegetable Fried Rice

EASY recipe

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, *divided*
6 eggs, whisked
2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
1 onion, diced
1 cup frozen shelled edamame
1 cup frozen peas

2 cloves garlic, minced
4 cups cooked and cooled
brown rice
3 green onions, thinly sliced
3 tbsp sodium-reduced soy sauce
1 tsp toasted sesame oil



Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in large pan over medium heat. **Add** egg, scramble until cooked and remove to a plate. **Add** remaining olive oil, then add carrots, onion, edamame, peas and garlic. **Sauté** 6-7 minutes until onion and carrots soften. **Add** cooked rice, green onions and soy sauce. **Stir** to combine and cook about 3 minutes to heat rice through. **Add** eggs and sesame oil. **Stir** to combine and serve warm.

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Build Your Soft Skills

Our softer, interpersonal skills help us build strong team relations, problem-solve and stay positive on the job. In fact, most employers now consider soft skills, or people skills, a critical priority.

Work on these primary abilities:

Communication. Whether written or verbal, communication expresses who you are and what you know or need to know. Done right, messaging fosters cooperation and strengthens everyone's work performance.

Teamwork. It takes the commitment and collaboration of many to succeed and grow. Effective team players support each other and can help build a friendly workplace culture.

Problem-solving. When something goes wrong, why complain when you can save the day? Exercise your leadership skills, take on challenges and present solutions.

Critical thinking. Every workplace needs people who offer fresh, creative ideas. Start analyzing how your organization might compete better or improve internal procedures.

Emotional control. Learning to manage your reactions can help you manage stress and stay productive. Know your stress triggers, such as change, mistakes or disagreements.



Q: Benefits of support groups?

A: **In support groups, members who share common health or emotional concerns** can meet and discuss their experiences to help each other cope better. Other benefits can include:

- A sense of empowerment and control.
- An ability to openly discuss your concerns.
- Finding resources.
- Feeling less isolated, depressed or anxious.
- Low cost.
- Forming friendships.
- A potential for personal growth.
- Receiving validation in a non-judgmental environment.



Support groups can vary greatly in size and format, so find one that's comfortable for you. Though they can be therapeutic, support groups do not replace medical care and differ from therapy groups, a treatment guided by a trained professional. To find support groups, ask health care providers, search online, contact organizations specializing in your condition or ask someone who shares your same concerns.

— Eric Endlich, PhD

Stretching Works Wonders

A regular stretching routine will reward you in many ways. Stretching helps protect and strengthen the muscles and joints and supports mobility as we age. The key: knowing how and when to stretch properly.

The primary benefit of stretching is to increase and maintain flexibility — vital whether putting on your shoes or preparing for vigorous exercise or sports. Flexibility declines as we age, resulting in short, tight muscles and increased risk of injuries and balance issues that contribute to falls.

Stretching and other flexibility exercises, including yoga and tai chi, can provide several benefits, including:

- Improved range of motion.
- Reduced pain, stiffness and stress.
- Enhanced muscular and joint function.
- Reduced risk of injury.
- Increased blood flow and circulation.

Ready to begin a stretching routine?

First, talk with your health care provider if you have joint or back problems, feel pain when you stretch or are recovering from an injury. Here are some basic guidelines:

Don't stretch a cold muscle. Doing so before exercise may impair your performance or limit protection from injury. Stretch after a 5- to 10-minute warm-up or after your main exercise is completed.

Work the major muscle groups. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends stretching at least two days each week, focusing on muscles susceptible to stiffness: hamstrings, hip flexors, calves and chest. It's beneficial to do sport-specific stretches involving those muscles most used in your activity.

Stretch slowly and smoothly without bouncing to reduce muscle tightness. You should feel tension but not pain; if you feel pain, you've pushed too far.

Exercise caution. If you've suffered a strain or an injury in the past, discuss this with your provider who may advise that you initially work with a physical therapist.

There's a condition affecting many Americans that Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy calls the loneliness epidemic.

With increased use of smartphones, tablets and laptops, and even after the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've become more emotionally and physically distant from those around us. You may talk to people daily through text messages or email, yet the lack of in-person interaction can lead to a deep sense of loneliness and isolation. **Start closing the distance:** Reach out to friends and family for quality time, in person. Host a potluck dinner or meet a buddy for coffee. You'll find the people in your life need real, face-to-face connection just as much as you do.



March is Nutrition Month.



Calm Down with Food



Eating can be an emotional anesthetic to relieve negative feelings, stress and daily hassles. Such food cravings are triggered by the stress hormone cortisol. As cortisol increases, it also raises your insulin level and lowers your blood sugar, causing cravings, especially for high-calorie sweets and fatty snacks.

Trouble is, the more low-nutrient foods we eat, the more stressed we may become — leading to more food cravings and weight gain. When you feel stressed and crave comfort foods, reach for foods that are nutritious and provide steady energy:

- Protein for breakfast and lunch helps maintain blood sugar and energy levels.
- Complex carbohydrates increase the amount of serotonin in your brain, which has a calming effect. Examples: whole grains and lots of fruits and vegetables.
- Drink plenty of water. Even mild dehydration can affect your mood.
- Avoid alcohol. As the calming effect subsides, alcohol can make you edgy.
- Limit caffeine if you're sensitive to it.
- Include foods high in omega-3 fatty acids. They may block surges in stress hormones.
- Don't overeat.

As the changes begin to take effect, you'll regain the calm you've been craving.

Mind-Soothing Music

The power of music to boost our mood and help us relax is well known. This power is useful in aiding medical treatment, in the form of music therapy, practiced by certified music therapists.

Music therapy has been linked to multiple benefits, including less anxiety during medical procedures, reduced cancer therapy side effects, relief from pain and depression, and improved quality of life for dementia sufferers.

The good news: You don't have to be in a hospital or in physical therapy to benefit from music. Just turn on a favorite song, ease into calm and let the day's worries melt away.



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Choosing a **Roadside Assistance Plan**

Stranded on the side of the road isn't on anyone's list of favorite places to be. Roadside assistance plans are helpful and can save money in an emergency, and it pays to browse before you buy. Here are a few tips to remember as you search for options:

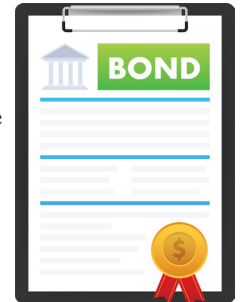
- 1 Check with your auto insurance company.** Many auto policies offer add-ons for roadside assistance for less than purchasing a standalone plan. Plans are also offered through credit cards, extended warranties, and auto manufacturers.
- 2 Review the offered coverage for features you need.** Towing, changing tires, providing gasoline, battery jumpstart, and lockout assistance are all common features. With towing coverage, is there a limit on the number of miles the plan will cover? Is the amount reasonable?
- 3 Whom or what does the plan cover?** Plans may insure you or your vehicle. The distinction is important. **If you are covered,** features should be available whether you are in a rental car, a friend's car or your car. **If your car is covered,** features will only be available if you are driving your car.
- 4 Consider premium features and potential limits.** Plans may offer specialty services, such as winching, rekeying if you lose your keys, battery replacement and membership discounts. Possible limits may include towing distance and number of calls covered per year.



Savings Bonds: Still a Good Investment?

Bonds were once considered too conservative by investors looking for a high return on their savings, but government securities are a reliable, safe way to secure money for the long term.

You can buy them from the government at [treasurydirect.gov](https://www.treasurydirect.gov). Paper bonds are no longer available. The bonds can be cashed in after a year, and they continue to pay interest until their maturity at 30 years.



You can choose from EE savings bonds and I savings bonds.

EE bonds provide a fixed interest rate which remains constant through the bond's life. I bonds have a fixed component and a variable component which changes every six months based on inflation (think of it as inflation protection built into the investment). You can buy \$10,000 worth of I bonds a year. Government bonds aren't an exciting way to save, but they're a secure investment for your nest egg.

What if you lose the savings bond you were given? Not to worry: Use Form 1048 Claim for Lost, Stolen, or Destroyed United States Savings Bonds. You don't need the bond's serial number, but the more information you provide, the more likely you can retrieve the bonds or receive payment for them.

TOP DOLLAR TIP: **CASH VS. CREDIT**

Have you noticed a price difference if you paid with cash or with credit card? In most states,

businesses can use surcharging to pass on card processing fees to customers

paying by credit. (They can't add a surcharge for debit card purchases, even when run as credit transactions.) Credit card surcharging may seem like a discount for paying cash, but it is actually an increase for those who use a credit card. Plan ahead and carry cash to cover purchases and avoid the markup. **Note:** It's legal to offer a discount for cash purchases in every state. This is known as cash discounting or dual pricing.



TOP DOLLAR DICTIONARY: Line of Credit

A line of credit is a form of open-ended credit through a financial lender, such as a commercial bank, credit union or brokerage firm. Borrowers can use a line of credit to obtain a cash advance when needed without having to reapply for a loan each time they need money. Lines of credit have a credit limit and a flexible repayment period. For a home-equity line of credit, lines of credit can be attached to equity in a person's home. Lines of credit are potential options for consolidating credit card and other high-interest debt; you pay off the debt at a lower interest rate and have one monthly payment. Make sure that the line of credit has a lower interest rate than any of the debts you are consolidating. If you do consolidate debt, be sure not to incur more debt on the now empty cards.



Q: What causes inflation?

A: Inflation is the steady rise in the overall level of prices. Inflation is measured by the changing cost over time using the model of a market basket of goods and services that a typical household might purchase. Inflation is measured by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics using the consumer price index (CPI). The market basket contains more than 400 goods and services sold across the U.S. Each item in the basket is weighted for importance in a hypothetical budget.



Inflation often occurs when the supply of money rises faster than the supply of goods and services available for purchase. According to Federal Reserve chairperson Jerome Powell, the primary drivers of inflation are supply chain problems, an oil shock following the invasion of Ukraine, consumers change to purchases of goods (e.g., furniture) rather than services (e.g., travel and eating out), and the low unemployment rate. Most economists believe inflation in the U.S. is falling after the spike in 2022 (6.2%), reaching 3.2% in October 2023.

Guide to Investing in Metals

If you love the warm gleam of gold and the cool shine of silver, you're not alone. For thousands of years, precious metals have fascinated humans. From the burial mask of Tutankhamun to wedding rings, the lure of beautiful metals shows no signs of fading. One way to build a treasure chest of your own is to invest in metals, such as gold, silver, platinum, and palladium.

You can buy coins and bullion from local currency exchanges, online retailers, or reputable online and brick-and-mortar dealers. Other options are mining company stocks, mutual funds and exchange traded funds (ETFs) that hold precious metals which you can add to your investment portfolio.

Precious metal investing help by diversifying your portfolio

— remember the old saying, don't put all your eggs in one basket.

Diversification helps you offset losses from other types of assets so that a dip in the market doesn't wipe out your entire portfolio, and you don't have to be wealthy to invest in them.

The cons? Because the value of metals fluctuates daily due to factors, such as scarcity, availability, geopolitical activity, market trends, natural events, and technological breakthroughs, they are more volatile than bonds and have lower returns than stocks. While gold is a hedge against inflation for certain short-term periods, allocating to stocks continues to be the best long-term solution to inflation.

The takeaway: Never buy until you thoroughly weigh the pros and cons of putting money in metals and your ability to accept risk, such as a sudden drop in value. Remember: Returns with any type of investment are not guaranteed.

Note: This information is for educational purposes only. For advice, contact a qualified investment adviser before you invest.



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SAFETY CORNER



March is Workplace Eye Wellness Month.

Eyewash 101

Do you know where your workplace eyewash station is? If not, find it and make sure it is easily accessible and not blocked by clutter or other obstacles. You don't want to waste any time when it comes to getting something out of your eye.

If your workplace doesn't require an on-site eyewash station, you can use a bathroom sink or water fountain as an eyewash. To remove a chemical from your eyes, follow these easy, but important steps:

- ➔ Do not rub your eyes or use eye drops. Instead, immediately flush your eyes with tepid water for at least 15 minutes. **CAUTION:** If a chemical is splashed in your eye, get someone to read the container label and/or the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for first-aid instructions. Some chemicals require longer times or in exceptional cases, require a specific cleansing agent.
- ➔ Hold your eyes open with your fingers while flushing and roll your eyes.
- ➔ If irritation persists, repeat the procedure.
- ➔ Have someone take you to the emergency room or your eye doctor immediately after, even if your vision is clear.
- ➔ Take a copy of the SDS or label information with you.



National Poison Prevention Week is March 17 to 23.

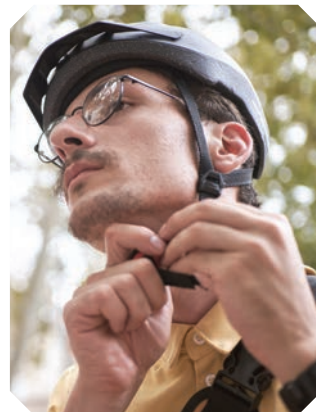
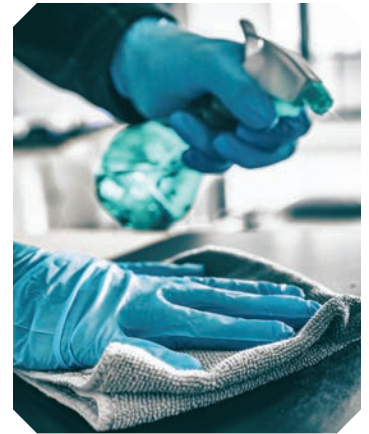


Prevent Poison Absorption

Accidental poisonings typically involve ingesting pills or chemicals, but you can also absorb many poisons through your skin.

The CDC estimates that more than 13 million workers in the U.S. may be exposed to skin-absorbent chemicals. As a safeguard, check your Safety Data Sheets (SDS) before working with any chemicals — including cleaning supplies, fertilizers and pesticides. To prevent skin irritation or worse:

- **Substitute** a nontoxic chemical if you can.
- **Read** the product's SDS before using or disposing any chemical or cleaner.
- **Follow** your employer's safety information.
- **Wear** protective gear, such as nonabsorbent goggles and gloves. **Caution:** Always check for damage or wear before using protective clothing and replace it if necessary.



March is Brain Injury Awareness Month.



Preventing Traumatic Brain Injury

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) can affect your life and the lives of those around you. Sometimes symptoms can appear right away and other times they may not occur until weeks after the injury.

Many times, TBIs can be prevented by following these guidelines:

- ✓ **Buckle up in a vehicle.** Make sure children are in age-appropriate and approved car or booster seats.
- ✓ **Wear a helmet** when on a bicycle, skateboard, motorcycle, scooter, ATV or horse and when participating in contact sports, and snow sports, such as skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling or skating.
- ✓ **Use fall prevention equipment** properly.
- ✓ **Hold onto the rails** when using stairs or escalators.
- ✓ **Place bars on windows** to prevent children from falling.
- ✓ **Sit safely on chairs** — make sure they are sturdy and don't lean back.
- ✓ **Keep obstacles out** of walking paths and off of stairs.



National Patient Safety Awareness Week is March 16 to 24.

Patient Advocacy

If you become an advocate for a relative or friend when he or she receives health care, here's what you need to know:



Make sure you are allowed to be an advocate. If it is an emergency situation

and the patient is your parent or child, institutions can usually share medical information. However, sometimes you will need medical power of attorney or a signed HIPAA authorization form. Do this before an emergency occurs.

Learn. Research the disease or injury that the patient is being hospitalized for — read pamphlets, consult reputable websites (e.g., cdc.gov, heart.org), and ask medical experts about things you don't understand.

Prepare. Have a list of questions prepared before meeting with health care providers. Some things to consider: medication amounts and times, staffing patterns, past health experiences, dietary needs, and likes and dislikes and goals for recovery. It's always wise to bring the patient's medical records, including allergy information.

Visit during doctors' rounds. Doctors typically have a schedule for making rounds (when they visit patient bedsides). This is the time to ask questions.

Ask questions. Use your prepared list of questions to get answers you need; if questions aren't answered, follow up.

Trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right or the patient complains, check into the issue to make sure he or she gets the best care.

Understand insurance. Know what the patient's health insurance covers and what it doesn't cover so the patient doesn't have surprises to deal with when he or she recovers.

Find out the next steps. Will your patient require follow-up care? Rehabilitation? What's the expected time for recovery?

Tip: If you or someone you trust cannot be there for the patient, consider hiring a private health care advocate.

March is Red Cross Month.

In the Know: Blood Donation



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 one use and use safe blood collection techniques to prevent infection. While guidelines vary by state, the basic requirements for donating blood are:

- Being healthy and feeling well.
- Being at least 16 to 17 years old (varies by state).
- Weighing at least 110 pounds.

Search other eligibility requirements at redcrossblood.org.

Most people have little or no reaction to donating blood; however, if you have any of the following symptoms after donating, call the blood donor center:

- Nausea, lightheadedness or dizziness after resting, eating and drinking.
- 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 four 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.

The Red Cross declared an emergency blood shortage in January, and it urges all eligible Americans to give blood or platelets. Every two seconds, someone needs blood in the U.S.

If you can, make an appointment today to donate this lifesaving resource. You can donate every 56 days and up to six times a year. Call the Red Cross at **1-800-733-2767**, go to redcrossblood.org or use the Red Cross Blood app. You could save a life.



Extend Your Ladder Knowledge

Ladder safety is basic — place the ladder on stable, even ground; inspect the ladder before use; keep three points of contact when ascending and descending the ladder; never carry tools or other objects in your hands while using a ladder and wear shoes that grip.

However, there are extra guidelines for extension ladders:

Read specific manufacturer's instructions regarding extension ladders — there are different guidelines for special situations.

Ensure that you don't place an extension ladder upside down.

Set the ladder at the proper angle. For example, when leaning a ladder against a wall, the bottom of the ladder should be one-quarter of the ladder's working, extended length away from the wall.

Don't step or stand higher than the step label that marks the highest standing level.

Never use an extension ladder horizontally like a platform.

Always extend the ladder three feet above the landing when accessing an elevated work surface.

Use extra care when getting off and on the ladder. Avoid tipping the ladder sideways or causing the base to slide off.

Don't exceed the load rating of your ladder. Remember to include the weight of tools, materials and equipment.



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SW SHIFT WORKER™

Achieving a Healthy Balance.

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Balancing Act: **Work and Family**

We've all heard it's important to have a work-life balance. But figuring out how to achieve it isn't always easy.

Tips for bringing your work and family into more harmony:



- **Commit to a healthy lifestyle.** A healthy diet, daily physical activity, adequate sleep and finding activities you can share with a partner, family or friends are essential to a balanced life, according to the Mayo Clinic.
- **Set limits for working from home.** Whether you telecommute or spend time occasionally working from home, set up a dedicated office space and make it clear to family and friends when you are at work. But also have a routine — such as shutting down your computer or going for a walk — which signals your workday has ended and you're ready for family time.
- **Develop a support system.** Enlist family members and trusted friends to help with childcare or pet care if you have to work late. Likewise, build relationships with coworkers who can cover for you (and vice versa) if a family matter arises.



Food, Stress and **Emotional Eating**

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

If you often turn to food when you feel stressed, sad or angry, this may be a coping mechanism known as emotional eating. You may reach for comfort food without realizing it, and even when you're not particularly hungry.

Maybe you're adjusting to a new shift, and comfort foods make you feel better, at least in the short term. Or lack of sleep reduces the energy you have to deal with issues that arise during your shift. Sleep deprivation can exacerbate the urge to grab fattier, high-calorie foods when things aren't going well.

Comfort foods tend to be ultra-processed and high in salt, sugar, fat and calories; think pizza, French fries, cookies and ice cream. While these foods are fine as occasional treats, habitual consumption due to emotional eating can lead to health problems, including obesity, heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

If you're eating for reasons other than hunger, it's time to consult a dietitian or a psychologist. They teach how to focus on your emotional and physical responses to food (mindful eating). Studies show that mindful eating can successfully help curb emotional or binge eating, stop impulsive food choices and help you make healthier choices.

To get started, find a dietitian or psychologist who specializes in mindful eating and understands the unique nature of shiftwork. You'll begin by tracking what you eat, when you eat and how you're feeling when you eat. This can help you see patterns between your mood and food cravings. Once you know your triggers, you can take steps to change.

The good news is, you can find other ways to ease your mind, such as physical activity. Read "**Shift Your Mood with Exercise**" in this issue.



It's Almost **Time** to **Spring Forward**

On Sunday, March 10, we'll move our clocks one hour ahead as Daylight Saving Time (DST) begins at 2 a.m. As you move your clocks an hour ahead, here are some ways to adjust to the new time:

- ❖ Get regular exercise to help improve sleep quality.
- ❖ Choose plenty of whole, unprocessed foods.
- ❖ Go to bed and get up 15 minutes earlier each day for a few days before DST begins to acclimate your body clock and reduce fatigue.
- ❖ Eat, exercise and sleep at consistent times.
- ❖ A dose of bright light in the morning can help you adjust to the time change, too.
- ❖ If you feel extra tired after the time change, supplement with a nap before your shift.
- ❖ Avoid caffeine close to bedtime. Research has shown that consuming caffeine within six hours of bedtime can interfere with your sleep cycle.
- ❖ People need time to adjust to Daylight Saving, and they may be more irritable, tired and short-tempered the days following. Be patient with yourself and others.



Shift Your **Mood** with **Exercise**

Whether you are feeling stressed, anxious, sad or mad, exercise can often help. Researchers have found a strong link between regular exercise and improvements in mental health and mood. Becoming more active can even enhance memory and cognition, too.

For example, Duke University researchers found that people who are active are less depressed than more sedentary folks. Studies also show exercise can help reduce anxiety and even control panic attacks, according to the American Psychological Association (APA).

Here's how physical activity positively impacts your mental outlook: After physical activity, you experience lower levels of stress-linked hormones, such as cortisol and epinephrine. And that can make you feel better emotionally.

It turns out that all forms of exercise — from walking and yoga to running and sports — improve mood. But if you are feeling too anxious, stressed or down to find the motivation to exercise, how do you start? The APA advises that beginning with any amount of physical activity, even a short walk, is better than not starting at all. You may soon find your outlook is better and you look forward to exercise.

Working the third shift also gives you the chance to use gyms and health clubs and other exercise facilities when the day world is asleep or getting ready for work. Fancy a swim at 6 a.m.? Hit the 24-hour gym and avoid peak times for day workers. Or stream an exercise video in your home.



Take **Action** Against **Distraction**

Like all jobs, shiftwork can have its share of distractions: Problem coworkers, constant deadlines and, of course, the urge to check your phone for the latest social media updates and texts. Pair that with managing work-life balance in a world mostly centered on daytime activities and you can end up with a lot on your mind.

When you're not paying attention, accidents and injuries are more likely to happen. That's why it's so important to be observant and pay attention to the task at hand, whether you're working on a factory floor, providing phone customer service to international customers, or on the road with a semi full of cargo at 3 a.m. Here's how you can help eliminate distractions:

- ✦ **Adopt healthy habits.** It's easier to keep your mind on your work when you're rested, when you exercise regularly and your meals are full of nutritious food.
- ✦ **Avoid the temptation to multi-task.** Research suggests multitasking causes us to make mistakes (think texting and driving).
- ✦ **Try not to disturb coworkers while they are performing their jobs.** While some shifts have fewer people than during the day, even a handful of employees can distract each other.
- ✦ **Don't use your phone on the job.** Save it for your breaks.
- ✦ **Never text and drive.** According to OSHA, studies show that drivers who receive or send text messages take their attention away from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds. If you are driving at 55 mph, that is like driving the length of a football field blindfolded.
- ✦ **Deal with stress.** If you find yourself becoming overly stressed, breathe deeply. Avoid eating fatty, sugary and high-calorie foods to feel better. The feeling won't last and you'll risk gaining weight and shorting yourself on important nutrients.



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Las amistades fomentan la buena salud



Las amistades con personas adultas crean vínculos sociales valiosos. Más que nunca desde la COVID-19, hemos visto personalmente los impactos de la soledad y el aislamiento social en las personas. El mantenerse conectado a través de amistades con personas adultas puede ayudarnos a superar cualquier impacto negativo del envejecimiento.

De hecho, las investigaciones han demostrado que el tener amigos cercanos puede ayudar a agregar años a su vida. Un estudio sugirió que aquellos con una red social más grande tenían una mortalidad más baja en un seguimiento de 10 años en comparación con aquellos con una red social más pequeña.

Específicamente, se demostró que los adultos con fuertes vínculos sociales mostraban tener un menor riesgo de problemas de salud importantes, inclusive depresión, presión arterial alta y un índice de masa corporal poco saludable. Y, por supuesto, la compañía y la camaradería también pueden mejorar la confianza en sí mismo y reducir el estrés.

Sin embargo, la Encuesta de Perspectivas Estadounidenses de 2021 encontró que los estadounidenses reportan tener menos amistades cercanas que antes. Lo bueno es que se trata más de calidad que de cantidad.

El mantener amistades cuando uno es un adulto ocupado puede a veces ser un desafío. Para conectar bien con otras personas, ayuda ser uno mismo y estar disponible para los amigos al hacer de sus relaciones una prioridad. Para fomentar la amistad, haga tiempo para las personas que son importantes para usted. Esté presente conectándose regularmente. Esté presente para sus amigos, especialmente cuando pudiera ser más importante para ellos.

Sea el amigo que usted quiera tener, y lidere con amabilidad y compasión. Puede mostrar su confianza como amigo compartiendo y pidiendo ayuda cuando llegue el momento.

El mes de marzo es el Mes de la nutrición.

Lista de comestibles del dietista

Por Cara Rosenbloom, RD



Es más fácil preparar comidas y bocadillos nutritivos cuando se planifican con anticipación. Un primer paso importante en la planificación es comprar los ingredientes adecuados y abastecer adecuadamente su nevera, congelador y despensa.

Algunas personas crean un plan de comidas y saben lo que van a cocinar cada noche. Otras prefieren confiar en una cocina bien abastecida para poder preparar comidas al último momento. Si prefiere lo último, esta lista de comestibles debe mantenerlo suministrado para deliciosas comidas de última hora.

Despensa:

- Frijoles y lentejas enlatados
- Pescado en conserva
- Arroz integral
- Fideos surtidos: pasta, fideos de arroz, etc.
- Granos integrales, como quinua y avena
- Nueces y semillas
- Mantequilla de maní
- Tomate enlatado y salsa de tomate
- Galletas integrales

Nevera:

- Leche o alternativa no láctea
- Huevos
- Yogur griego
- Queso
- Hojas verdes para ensaladas (espinacas, lechuga romana, col rizada, etc.)
- Vegetales: brócoli, zanahorias, pimientos dulces, etc.
- Frutas: manzanas, bayas, melones, etc.
- Condimentos: mayonesa, mostaza, salsa de soja, etc.

Congelador:

- Vegetales congelados, como guisantes, brócoli y mezclas para saltar
 - Frutas congeladas, como melocotones, mango y bayas
 - Pollo
 - Pescado y mariscos, como salmón y camarones

Mostradores de cocina:

- Pan, pan tipo pita y tortillas
- Frutas y verduras conservadas a temperatura ambiente: tomates, aguacate, plátanos, etc.

Armario oscuro:

- Cebollas
- Papas y batatas (boniatos)
- Ajo

Alimentos básicos para tener a mano:

- Aceite de oliva extra virgen u otros aceites de cocina
- Vinagre (sidra, arroz, balsámico)
- Sal y pimienta
- Hierbas secas y especias favoritas

Puede mezclar y combinar los alimentos de esta lista de compras para hacer deliciosas combinaciones de comidas, como:

- Salteado de camarones: vegetales congelados para saltar, camarones, fideos.
- Cena de pollo: pollo, brócoli, verduras de hojas verdes, quinua.
- Pasta al horno: pasta, salsa de tomate, garbanzos enlatados, queso.
- Arroz frito con verduras: huevos, arroz integral, guisantes congelados, zanahorias.
- Rollitos de mantequilla de maní y plátano: mantequilla de maní, plátano, tortilla o pan pita.



El horario de verano y su salud



El horario de verano

(DST por sus siglas en inglés) afecta los ritmos naturales de su cuerpo.

Y el resultado puede ser mucho más que sentirse más somnoliento después de adelantar su reloj una hora el 10 de marzo. ¿Cuál es la razón? El cambio en la hora interrumpe los ritmos naturales del cuerpo.

Los defensores del horario de verano asumieron que se haría un mejor uso de más luz diurna en primavera y verano, y una mayor exposición a la luz solar mejoraría el estado de ánimo. Pero las investigaciones muestran que el horario de verano está asociado con trastornos psicológicos, aumento de peso, aumento de ataques cardíacos y accidentes cerebrovasculares e incluso más accidentes automovilísticos.

El horario de verano puede afectar su salud debido a cómo el cambio de hora afecta el ritmo circadiano: el ciclo biológico natural de 24 horas del cuerpo, establecido por el horario y la cantidad diaria de exposición a la luz brillante. Durante el horario de verano, que dura hasta principios de noviembre, su cuerpo recibe menos luz por la mañana y más luz por la tarde, lo que puede alterar su ritmo circadiano.

La Academia Estadounidense de Medicina del Sueño (*American Academy of Sleep Medicine*) y otros expertos en sueño aconsejan eliminar el horario de verano, pero no han tenido éxito. Sin embargo, estos consejos pueden ayudarle a salir mejor durante el horario de verano:

- Durante uno o dos días previos al cambio al horario de verano, salga por la mañana. Una luz matutina más natural puede ayudar a preservar su ritmo circadiano.
- La noche antes de que comience el horario de verano, acuéstese una hora antes de lo normal para prepararse. Evite la cafeína, el alcohol y la exposición a la luz azul una o dos horas antes de acostarse.
- El hacer ejercicio por la mañana puede aumentar la vigilia. También ayuda a restablecer su reloj interno.

Manténgase informado sobre sus medicamentos

Por Elizabeth Smoots, MD

La información sobre medicamentos recetados y de venta sin receta cambia con el tiempo.

Es importante mantenerse al día con nuevas advertencias, efectos secundarios, interacciones o retiradas del mercado de los medicamentos que toma. Estas herramientas pueden ayudarle a mantenerse informado.

MedWatch es una publicación de la FDA y proporciona alertas de seguridad para productos regulados por la FDA, como medicamentos de venta con receta y de venta sin receta, dispositivos médicos, cosméticos, alimentos y bebidas. Para obtener más información, busque **MedWatch** en [fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov).

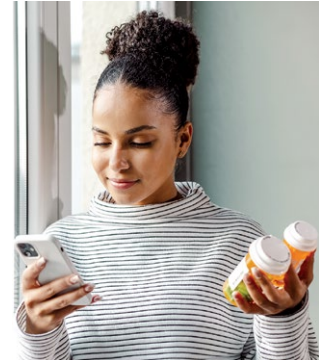
El **verificador de seguridad de la FDA** es una base de datos con capacidad de búsqueda para información sobre retiros de medicamentos, retiros del mercado y alertas de seguridad en [fda.gov/safety/recalls-market-withdrawals-safety-alerts](https://www.fda.gov/safety/recalls-market-withdrawals-safety-alerts).

MedlinePlus ofrece una amplia gama de información sobre medicamentos, hierbas y suplementos en [medlineplus.gov](https://www.nlm.nih.gov).

Drugs.com proporciona acceso a actualizaciones de la FDA y aprobaciones de nuevos medicamentos. También tiene un identificador de pastillas, un verificador de efectos secundarios y un verificador de interacciones con medicamentos, alimentos y enfermedades.

Su **profesional médico y farmacéutico** son fuentes confiables de información actualizada sobre medicamentos.

Consejo sobre los medicamentos: Es importante evitar tomar más de un medicamento con el mismo ingrediente. Por ejemplo, muchos remedios para el resfriado contienen acetaminofén. Si toma más de uno de estos productos para el resfriado, puede exceder la dosis máxima recomendada de acetaminofén; esto puede causar daño hepático. Revise la lista de ingredientes en la etiqueta para cada medicamento que use.



Beneficios de los guantes con peso

Los guantes con peso desarrollan fuerza y resistencia y tonifican los brazos. Levantar pesas y hacer ejercicio con máquinas de resistencia no son algo nuevo, pero usar guantes con peso puede ser una forma más conveniente y menos complicada de agregar entrenamiento con pesas a su misión de acondicionamiento físico.

Hasta ahora principalmente los boxeadores han utilizado guantes pesados y con peso cuando entrenan con bolsas de boxeo. Ahora cualquiera puede elegir entre una amplia variedad de guantes con pesos pequeños en tiendas de artículos deportivos y en línea.

Los guantes con pesos para el ejercicio suelen tener soportes tipo bolsillo en la parte posterior que sostienen los pesos (generalmente de 1/2 a 1 libra para principiantes y hasta 4 libras para los que están en mejor forma). Algunos vienen con varios pesos diferentes para que pueda agregar o restar la cantidad de peso de los guantes. También es importante asegurarse de que los guantes tengan correas seguras pero cómodas.

Entonces, si uno no es boxeador, ¿qué puede hacer con guantes con pesos? El potenciar su rutina de caminar a la vez que lleva peso adicional es una de las actividades más fáciles. Así quemará más calorías. Los guantes también añaden resistencia adicional para fortalecer la parte superior del cuerpo. El caminar regularmente con guantes con pesos puede fortalecer la densidad ósea, reduciendo también el riesgo de osteoporosis. También puede aumentar la aptitud cardiovascular y desarrollar resistencia.

Si los guantes no son para usted, trate de usar pesas en los tobillos y muñecas. Si bien todo puede ayudar a lograr una buena condición física si se usa de forma segura, hable con su profesional médico antes de usar pesas portátiles si tiene problemas de espalda, articulaciones o equilibrio u otras afecciones crónicas.



LA ESQUINA DE LA SEGURIDAD



El mes de marzo es el Mes del bienestar de los ojos en el lugar de trabajo.

Elementos básicos del lavado de ojos

¿Sabe dónde está la estación de lavado de ojos en su lugar de trabajo? Si no es así, encuéntrala y asegúrese de que sea fácilmente accesible y no esté bloqueada por el desorden u otros obstáculos. No querrá perder el tiempo cuando se trata de sacarse algo del ojo.

Si su lugar de trabajo no requiere una estación de lavado de ojos en sus instalaciones, puede usar un fregadero del baño o una fuente de agua como estación de lavado de ojos. Para eliminar una sustancia química de los ojos, siga estos pasos fáciles pero importantes:

- ➔ No se frote los ojos ni use gotas para los ojos. En su lugar, enjuáguese los ojos con agua tibia durante por lo menos 15 minutos. **ADVERTENCIA:** Si le salpica una sustancia química en el ojo, alerte a alguien para que lea la etiqueta del envase y/u obtenga la Hoja de Datos de Seguridad (SDS) para obtener las instrucciones de primeros auxilios. Algunas sustancias químicas requieren tiempos más largos o, en casos excepcionales, requieren un agente limpiador específico.
- ➔ Mantenga los ojos abiertos con los dedos mientras esté enjuagándose los ojos y voltee los ojos hacia arriba.
- ➔ Si la irritación persiste, repita el procedimiento.
- ➔ Haga que alguien lo lleve a la sala de emergencias o a su oftalmólogo inmediatamente después, incluso si su visión está clara.
- ➔ Lleve consigo una copia de la información de la SDS o de la etiqueta.



La Semana nacional de prevención de envenenamientos se celebra del 17 al 23 de marzo.

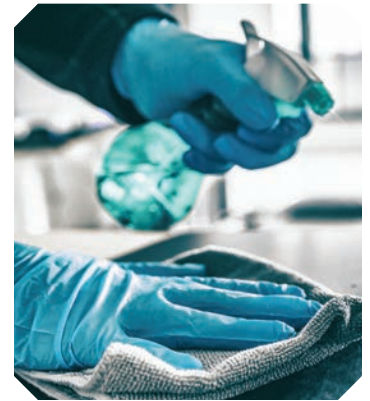


Prevención de la absorción de venenos

Las intoxicaciones o envenenamientos accidentales generalmente implican la ingestión de píldoras o sustancias químicas, pero uno también puede absorber muchos venenos a través de la piel.

Los CDC estiman que más de 13 millones de trabajadores en los Estados Unidos pueden estar expuestos a sustancias químicas que se absorben por la piel. Como medida de seguridad, revise sus Hojas de Datos de Seguridad (SDS) antes de trabajar con cualquier sustancia química, inclusive productos de limpieza, fertilizantes y pesticidas. Para prevenir la irritación de la piel o algo peor:

- **Sustituya** con una sustancia química no tóxica, de ser posible.
- **Lea** la SDS del producto antes de usar o desechar cualquier sustancia química o limpiador.
- **Obedezca** la información de seguridad de su empleador.
- **Use** equipo de protección, como gafas de seguridad y guantes no absorbentes. **Precaución:** Siempre verifique si hay daños o desgaste antes de usar ropa protectora y reemplácela si es necesario.



El mes de marzo es el Mes de concientización sobre las lesiones cerebrales.



Cómo prevenir las lesiones cerebrales

Una lesión cerebral traumática (LCT) puede afectar su vida y la vida de las personas que lo rodean. A veces los síntomas pueden aparecer de inmediato y otras veces pueden no ocurrir hasta semanas después de la lesión.

Muchas veces, las LCT se pueden prevenir siguiendo estas pautas:

- ✓ **Póngase el cinturón de seguridad en un vehículo.** Asegúrese de que los niños estén en asientos para el vehículo o asientos elevados apropiados para su edad y aprobados.
- ✓ **Use un casco** cuando ande en bicicleta, monopatín, motocicleta, scooter, vehículo todo terreno o a caballo y cuando participe en deportes de contacto y deportes de nieve como esquí, snowboarding, motos de nieve o patinaje.
- ✓ **Utilice el equipo de prevención** de caídas correctamente.
- ✓ **Sujétese de los rieles** cuando use escaleras o escaleras mecánicas.
- ✓ **Coloque barras en las ventanas** para evitar que los niños se caigan.
- ✓ **Siéntese de forma segura en las sillas.** Asegúrese de que sean resistentes y no se incline hacia atrás.
- ✓ **Mantenga los obstáculos fuera** de los senderos para caminar y fuera de las escaleras.



La Semana nacional de concientización sobre la seguridad de los pacientes se celebra del 16 al 24 de marzo.

Defensa del paciente

Si se conviertes en defensor de un familiar o amigo cuando recibe atención médica, esto es lo que necesita saber:

Asegúrese de que se le permita ser un defensor.

Si se trata de una situación de emergencia y el paciente es uno de sus padres o su hijo, las instituciones generalmente pueden compartir información médica. Sin embargo, a veces necesitará un poder legal médico o un formulario de autorización de HIPAA firmado. Haga esto antes de que ocurra una emergencia.



Aprenda. Investigue la enfermedad o lesión por la que el paciente está siendo hospitalizado: lea folletos, consulte sitios web de buena reputación (por ejemplo, cdc.gov, heart.org) y pregunte a expertos médicos sobre cosas que no entiende.

Prepárese. Tenga una lista de preguntas preparadas antes de reunirse con los profesionales médicos. Algunas cosas a tener en cuenta: cantidades y horarios de los medicamentos, patrones de personal, experiencias de salud previas, necesidades dietéticas, y gustos y desagrados y metas para la recuperación. Siempre es aconsejable traer los expedientes médicos del paciente, incluida la información sobre las alergias.

Visitas durante las rondas de médicos. Los médicos suelen tener un horario para hacer rondas (cuando visitan a los pacientes que se encuentran en sus camas). Este es el momento de hacer preguntas.

Haga preguntas. Utilice su lista de preguntas preparada de antemano para obtener las respuestas que necesita; si las preguntas no reciben respuesta, haga un seguimiento.

Confíe en sus instintos. Si algo no le parece bien o el paciente se queja, investigue el problema para asegurarse de que el paciente reciba la mejor atención.

Entienda los seguros. Sepa lo que cubre el seguro médico del paciente y lo que no cubre para que el paciente no tenga sorpresas con las que lidiar cuando se recupere.

Determine los siguientes pasos. ¿Su paciente requerirá atención de seguimiento? ¿Rehabilitación? ¿Cuál es el tiempo anticipado para la recuperación?

Sugerencia: Si usted o alguien de confianza no puede estar allí para el paciente, considere contratar a un defensor de atención médica privado.

El mes de marzo es el Mes de la Cruz Roja.

Lo que debe saber: Donación de sangre



Donar sangre es seguro si uno pasa por los canales adecuados y se observan las pautas. La Cruz Roja utiliza agujas nuevas y estériles que se desechan después de un uso y utiliza técnicas seguras de recolección de sangre para prevenir infecciones. Si bien las pautas varían según el estado, los requisitos básicos para donar sangre son:

- Estar sano y sentirse bien.
- Tener al menos de 16 a 17 años de edad (varía según el estado).
- Pesar al menos 110 libras.

Busque otros requisitos de elegibilidad en redcrossblood.org.

La mayoría de las personas tienen poca o ninguna reacción a la donación de sangre; sin embargo, si tiene alguno de los siguientes síntomas después de la donación, llame al centro de donación de sangre:

- Náuseas, aturdimiento o mareos después de descansar, comer y beber.
- Un abultamiento, sangrado continuo o dolor en el sitio del pinchazo de la aguja cuando se retira el vendaje.
- Dolor u hormigueo por el brazo, hasta llegar a los dedos.
- Fiebre, dolor de cabeza o dolor de garganta (resfriado o gripe), dentro de los cuatro días después de su donación de sangre. Las infecciones bacterianas pueden transmitirse por la sangre a otra persona a través de una transfusión, por lo que es importante comunicarse con el centro de donación de sangre para que no se use la sangre.

La Cruz Roja declaró una escasez de sangre de emergencia en el mes de enero, e insta a todos los estadounidenses elegibles a donar sangre o plaquetas. Cada dos segundos, alguien necesita sangre en los Estados Unidos.

Si puede, haga una cita hoy mismo para donar este recurso que salva vidas. Puedes donar cada 56 días y hasta seis veces al año. Llame a la Cruz Roja al **1-800-733-2767**, vaya a redcrossblood.org o utilice la aplicación Red Cross Blood. Podría salvar una vida.

Amplíe sus conocimientos sobre las escaleras

La seguridad de las escaleras es básica: coloque la escalera en un suelo estable y nivelado; inspeccione la escalera antes de usarla; mantenga tres puntos de contacto al subir y bajar por la escalera; nunca lleve herramientas u otros objetos en las manos mientras usa una escalera y use zapatos con agarre.

Sin embargo, existen pautas adicionales para las escaleras de extensión:

Lea las instrucciones específicas del fabricante con respecto a las escaleras de extensión. Hay diferentes pautas para situaciones especiales.

Asegúrese de no colocar una escalera de extensión invertida.

Coloque la escalera en el ángulo adecuado. Por ejemplo, cuando se apoya una escalera contra una pared, los pies de la escalera deben estar alejados de la pared a una distancia equivalente a un cuarto de la longitud extendida de la escalera.

No pise ni se pare más arriba de la etiqueta del escalón que marca el nivel más alto donde uno se puede pararse con seguridad.

Siempre extienda la escalera tres pies por encima de la superficie de llegada cuando acceda a una superficie de trabajo elevada.

Tenga cuidado especial al subirse y bajar de la escalera. Evite inclinar la escalera hacia los lados o hacer que la base se deslice.

Nunca use una escalera de extensión horizontalmente como una plataforma.

No exceda la capacidad de carga de su escalera. No se olvide de incluir el peso de las herramientas, los materiales y el equipo.

