November is American Diabetes Month

Diabetes has reached epidemic proportions in the United States and around the world. One in four Americans has diabetes or is at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin. Insulin is a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life. The cause of diabetes continues to be a mystery, although both genetics and environmental factors such as obesity and lack of exercise appear to play roles. There are 20.8 million children and adults in the United States, or 7% of the population, who have diabetes. While an estimated 14.6 million have been diagnosed with diabetes, unfortunately, 6.2 million people (or nearly one-third) are unaware that they have the disease. Diabetes often goes undiagnosed because many of its symptoms seem so harmless. Recent studies indicate that the early detection of diabetes symptoms and treatment can decrease the chance of developing the complications of diabetes. Some symptoms include:
- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst
- Extreme hunger
- Unusual weight loss
- Increased fatigue
- Irritability
- Blurry vision

If you have one or more of these diabetes symptoms, see your doctor right away. You can also take the American Diabetes Association Online Diabetes Risk Test to find out if you are at risk for diabetes.

Major Types of Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes

Results from the body’s failure to produce insulin, the hormone that "unlocks" the cells of the body, allowing glucose to enter and fuel them. It is estimated that 5-10% of Americans who are diagnosed with diabetes have type 1 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes

Results from insulin resistance (a condition in which the body fails to properly use insulin), combined with relative insulin deficiency. Most Americans who are diagnosed with diabetes have type 2 diabetes.

Pre-diabetes

Pre-diabetes is a condition that occurs when a person’s blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not high enough for a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes. There are 54 million Americans who have pre-diabetes, in addition to the 20.8 million with diabetes.

For more information on diabetes please go to the American Diabetes Association Website or contact your local physician. Source: http://www.diabetes.org/about-diabetes.jsp

Also please show your support on World Diabetes Day, November 14th, 2007 by wearing a Blue Circle Pin-Distributed Mon

Be a Quitter Today!

Every year, smokers across the nation take part in the American Cancer Society’s Great American Smokeout® by smoking less or quitting for the day on the third Thursday of November. This year the Great American Smokeout® will take place on November 15, 2007. The event challenges people to stop using tobacco and raises awareness of the many effective ways to quit for good. Research shows that smokers are most successful in kicking the habit when they have some means of support, such as nicotine replacement products, counseling, prescription medicine to lessen cravings, guide books, and the encouragement of friends and family members. Telephone quit-lines are also a convenient new resource, available for free in many states. Call 1-800-ACS-2345 to find a quit-line or other support in your area.

Smokeout Fueled New Laws, Now Paying Off in Lives Saved

Each year, the Great American Smokeout also draws attention to the deaths and chronic diseases caused by smoking. And throughout the late 1980s and 1990s, many state and local governments responded by banning smoking in workplaces and restaurants, raising taxes on cigarettes, limiting advertising, discouraging teen cigarette use, and taking further actions to counter smoking. Those states with strong tobacco control laws are now reaping the fruits of their labor. They have markedly lower smoking rates and fewer people dying of lung cancer.

According to a 2003 report in Cancer Causes and Control, today, an estimated 45 million US adults smoke. Tobacco use can cause lung cancer, as well as other cancers, heart disease, and lung disease. Smoking is responsible for 1 in 3 cancer deaths, and 1 in 5 deaths from all causes. Another 8.6 million people are living with serious illnesses caused by smoking. Fortunately, the past 30 years have seen tremendous strides in changing attitudes about smoking, in understanding the addiction, and in learning how to help people quit.

For more information visit ACS online or call your American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.

Source: ACS online
Low Impact Exercises Are Fun and Healthy

Not everyone is made for high-level exercising. But you can become fit without bouncing around in a leotard, battering your joints. Forget all the huffing, puffing, lugging, lifting, and straining. Movement therapy is a gentle – yet effective – group of sports that include yoga, tai chi, and Pilates. Just don’t be fooled by their mild manner. These activities can whip you into shape without breaking a sweat.

All three have ancient Eastern roots and are merely different interpretations of the same principle: keeping your body and mind in harmony naturally leads to better health. It wasn’t until recently that modern science confirmed the many physical benefits of yoga, tai chi, and Pilates. With them, you can improve your balance, flexibility, and strength – no matter what your age, weight, or fitness level.

No Pain – but great gain

Yoga, tai chi, and Pilates are gentle enough for anyone to try. If you consider yourself in bad health or disabled in some way, you’re a perfect candidate for these movement therapies. You can ease into the programs slowly and set your own pace. It’s easy to stick with them and you’ll see improvement quickly.

Here are just some of the benefits you will get from these soothing approaches to fitness.

- When you were a child, tripping and falling meant just another minor scrape. But as you get older, taking a tumble can have serious and crippling effects. If your sense of balance is as bad as Humpty Dumpty’s, these are the safest forms of exercise for you. Just like the trick to growing tomatoes is to keep the main stalk strong, the trick to great balance is to keep your core muscles strong. The bands of muscle in your abdomen, lower back, and buttocks are the center of strength and control for the rest of your body. All three examples of movement therapy are relatively stationary, but because they strengthen your core muscles, your balance will improve quickly – preventing falls – and you’ll develop greater flexibility and strength. Soon you will be moving with confidence again.

- Tai chi and yoga are especially recommended for people with arthritis. Gentle yoga can improve arthritis in your hands, for example, and tai chi’s precise, flowing movements help keep your joints limber, relieve your pain, and keep you active. The dance-like stretches, poses, and maneuvers within each of these movement therapies will gently strengthen and tone your body. Pilates is especially good as a strength-training workout.

- Add yoga or Pilates to your exercise regimen if you need to improve your heart health.

- In today’s hectic world, it may be hard to squeeze an extra 30 minutes of exercise into your schedule – at least without feeling even more stress. The beautiful thing about movement therapy is that it combines stress relief with exercise, so you kill two birds with one stone.

- All the activities – tai chi, yoga, and Pilates – are done slowly, with intense focus on proper breathing and posture. They all relax your body and calm your mind.

- As you can see, you can boost your overall health with these joyful, health-giving movements.

Things to know before you give it a go

Just to be safe, make sure that you take these precautions before starting any new exercise program.

- Get your doctor’s approval on your fitness plan, especially if you’ve badly injured your back, neck, knees, or shoulders in the past.

- The stretches, poses, and movements of these therapies should not hurt. If you feel pain, stop and check your technique before continuing.

- Pilates is the most intense of the three exercise forms. You may want to try one of the less strenuous programs first if you are out of shape.

- Be forewarned, you might get addicted to these calming sports.

By Raymond Geok Seng Lee


Quit the Nic!

From Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, your health care provider, they offer their own smoking cessation program.

We have developed tools to help our members quit smoking. In addition to the option of using Zyban and nicotine replacement therapy such as patches, gum or nasal sprays, we encourage our smoking members to enroll in Quit the Nic!

Quit the Nic!, our free smoking cessation program, has a proven track record of helping members give up tobacco for good.

Participants receive telephone support, educational materials, and opportunities to speak with a health coach about how to kick the habit. Our health coaches help develop a plan of action and establish a quit date. They also serve as a support system by offering encouragement, answering questions and evaluating progress.

To enroll, call Blue Health Connection at 800-775-2583.

To learn more, read our Quit the Nic! Brochure (175K PDF).
Leftover Turkey Vegetable Soup

Since Fall is a great time for soul warming soup, I thought this would be an enjoyable fall recipe and a great way to use some of those Thanksgiving leftovers! Enjoy all that holiday food and wind it down with this hearty soup! Please share some recipes with us!

INGREDIENTS
1. large onion, chopped
2. 1/4 cup butter or olive oil
3. medium sweet potatoes, peeled & chopped
4. medium zucchini, chopped
5. large carrots, diced
6. bunch broccoli, chopped
7. Quarts low sodium turkey broth or chicken stock
8. medium potatoes, diced
9. 1/2 cup celery, chopped
10. cup mushrooms, chopped (optional)
11. teaspoons salt
12. 1/4-1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
13. cups turkey, diced
14. 1 teaspoon pepper, more to taste

DIRECTIONS
1. Sauté onion & celery in butter.
2. Add sweet potatoes, carrots, zucchini, mushroom & broccoli and sauté lightly for 5 min.
3. Stir in broth; simmer for a few minutes.
4. Add potatoes & seasonings; cook another 10 min. or until vegetables are tender.

Source: www.recipezaar.com

Portion Control

Sizes for everything from bananas to soft drinks have gotten larger in the past 20 years. It’s not enough to eat the right kinds of food to maintain a healthy weight or to lose weight. Eating the right amount of food at each meal is just as important. If you are a healthy eater, it is possible to sabotage your efforts by eating more than the recommended amount of food. A serving is a specific amount of food, and it might be smaller than you realize. Here are some examples:

- A serving of meat (boneless, cooked weight) is two to three ounces, or roughly the size of the palm of your hand, a deck of cards, or an audiocassette size.
- A serving of chopped vegetables or fruit is 1/2 cup, or approximately half a baseball or a rounded handful.
- A serving of fresh fruit is one medium piece, or the size of a baseball.
- A serving of cooked pasta, rice, or cereal is 1/2 cup, or half a baseball or a rounded handful.
- A serving of cooked beans is 1/2 cup, or half a baseball or a rounded handful.
- A serving of nuts is 1/3 cup, or a level handful for an average adult.
- A serving of peanut butter is two tablespoons, about the size of a golf ball.

No matter which diet you choose, be sure to talk with your health care provider first, before starting any type of eating plan. You might want to ask your provider for a referral to a registered dietician (RD) who can help you. You might also want to enlist the help of a family member or friend to give you support and help you stay on track. Try to have some fun learning new recipes and different ways to cook!

Source: http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?

Thanksgiving Day Food Safety Tips

Thanksgiving is upon us and with it comes the traditional turkey dinner. However, the improper storing, cooking, and serving of roast turkey can lead to growth of harmful bacteria like salmonella, which can cause food borne illness. The DuPage County Health Department advises consumers that safe food handling of turkey and other holiday foods is essential in preventing food borne illness. Here are some tips to share with your family for preparing a Thanksgiving bird safely.

- Thaw the frozen turkey in the refrigerator. Allow one day for each five pounds of turkey. A twenty-pound turkey will take about four days to thaw. Hint: Remove neck & giblets from inside the bird ASAP to hasten thawing.
- Do not thaw on the kitchen counter. If you do not have time to thaw in the refrigerator, you may thaw it in cold water, provided that the turkey is in a leak-proof packaging, it is submerged, and the water is changed every half-hour. Allow 30 minutes per pound of turkey to thaw in cold water.
- Cook fresh turkeys within two days, thawed ones within four days.
- Wash your hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling raw poultry. Wash all knives, cutting boards and utensils also after using for raw poultry.
- Read and follow the cooking directions on the label. Cook turkey until it is done (165°F). Do not slow cook overnight at low temperatures or partially cook. Some turkeys come with pop-up thermometers. They are to be used only as a guide to doneness. Take the temperature with a meat thermometer to be sure the temperature is over 165°F.
- Stuffing should not be prepared a day ahead and the turkey should not be stuffed until ready to cook.
- Eat the meal as soon as it is prepared. Do not leave leftovers out on the counter or table after dinner.

Follow these simple tips to help assure your family and guests a safe Thanksgiving Day. For more information on food safety, see Peachy Keen’s Food Safety in the Home.

Source: http://www.dupagehealth.org/safefood/consumer/seasonal/
Choosing the Right Health Club for YOU!

A health club can be a great fitness motivator if you choose the right one. Before you sign on the dotted line, be sure the club you choose suits your personal needs and fitness goals. Decide what’s important to you. Consider:

**Location**
One of the most important things to consider in choosing a health club is where it is. You’ll just have one more excuse not to work out if the club is out of your way or takes too long to get to. Try to find a good facility close to your home or job.

**Staff**
Instructors should be professionally certified. If you have physical limitations, make sure there’s an instructor trained to work with you. If the age of your instructors matters, find a club with more mature staff. Staff members should always be polite, helpful, and professional toward all clients. Some clubs have dietitians, massage therapists, and physical therapists who offer extra services to members. Ask about these services if they are important to you.

**Programs**
What are you interested in? If you like group fitness classes, see what’s available and when. Make sure the classes you want to take are offered at convenient times. Don’t choose a club that focuses on boot camp and kickboxing classes if you want to do yoga and Pilates. The best way to tell if you’re going to like a class is to try it. Most clubs will let you take a trial class or use the club on a tryout basis for a day, week, or month.

When you take a class, see how you like the instructor, the pace of the class, the music, and the room. Is the class overcrowded? Is the workout space big enough and suited for the exercise you’re doing? For instance, if you’re taking a dance class, is there enough room to move about, a good wood floor, and mirrored wall?

Some clubs have tennis courts and swimming pools. If you will use them, visit the club when you normally would go and see if there’s a wait. Check to see that the courts and pool are in good condition, clean, and well-lit. The pool should be easy to get in and out of, and the water should feel warm.

**Equipment**
Weight-training machines, treadmills, bicycles, mats, balls, and all other equipment should be clean, modern, and in good working order. There also should be enough equipment to avoid making members wait. For instance, treadmills are the most popular piece of equipment at health clubs. Not having enough of them means you’ll have to wait in line for a turn. Up-to-date equipment is safer, more comfortable, and sometimes easier to use. Stationary bicycles, for example, now have back support and wider seats for added comfort. Hand weights are covered with brightly colored plastic, making them softer and easier to grip. These features can be especially appealing to older adults. See if the club has state-of-the-art equipment.

**Maintenance**
The entire facility should be clean, safe, and well-maintained. Make sure to check it out. **Social Interaction**
An important aspect of a health club membership for many members is socializing. Friends you make at the club can become workout buddies and help you stay motivated. Working out with others is also fun. Clubs that encourage socializing have gathering areas, such as a place to sit with comfortable couches and chairs. Clubs often have coffee, tea, and juice machines, as well as television sets. Some clubs organize members for group walks or runs, bicycle rides, or sports events, like triathlons. Look for these features when you’re checking out a club. Ask how many members in the club are your age.

**Compare Clubs**
When you’re shopping for a health club, visit more than one if there are several in your area. This gives you a frame of reference for comparing. Friends, family members, or coworkers might be able to recommend clubs they like. Once you pick a club you really like, visit again. Take a tour and talk to staff and club members. Ask for a free pass and go back several times to work out. Go when you would normally use the club to see what it’s like during that time.

**Signing on the Dotted Line**
If you’re convinced you’ve found the club for you, have a staff person explain costs—in detail. You’ll want to know include:

*What is your monthly membership fee? What does it cover?*
*Which programs and services cost extra?*
*Is there an initiation fee? Are there hidden costs?*
*How often do rates increase and by how much?*
*How long has the club been in business?*
*Does the club have a month-to-month contract?*
*What is the refund or cancellation policy, if any?*
*Is the club running any special promotions?*

Health clubs often run promotion discounts to attract new members. Don’t feel pressured to sign a contract right away. Take time to review it carefully and ask questions if something is unclear. It’s a good idea to talk to other members about their experiences with the club. Once you sign on, enjoy your club often. You’ve made a worthwhile investment in your health!


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**Celebrating Wellness**
Thanks to everyone who participated in the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth weeks of Celebrate Wellness! Congratulations to the each weeks winners:

**Week 2**
Marsha Larmour & Christine Olivier-Hakes

**Week 3**
Leslie Kallioinen & June Nelson

**Week 4**
Sue Young & Kathy Maki

**Week 5**
Kerry Mohr & Lucey Dagenais

**Week 6**
John Limback & JoDee Larsh

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**Frozen Chosin Endurathon Race**
Saturday November, 10th, All Day
Adventure Race featuring five station events: rope bridge crossing, rappelling, sled pull, fingal's finers (log toss), the row. Four-person teams compete over 30K course. Hosted by NMU's Ranger Challenge club

**Balancing Female Hormones Naturally Lecture**
Monday, November 19th, 5:30pm McLean Family Chiropractic, Gwinn Office -McLean Family Chiropractic Center invites you to a lecture by Dr. Stephanie Wautier R.N., B.S.N., D.C.