

# Healthy Habits

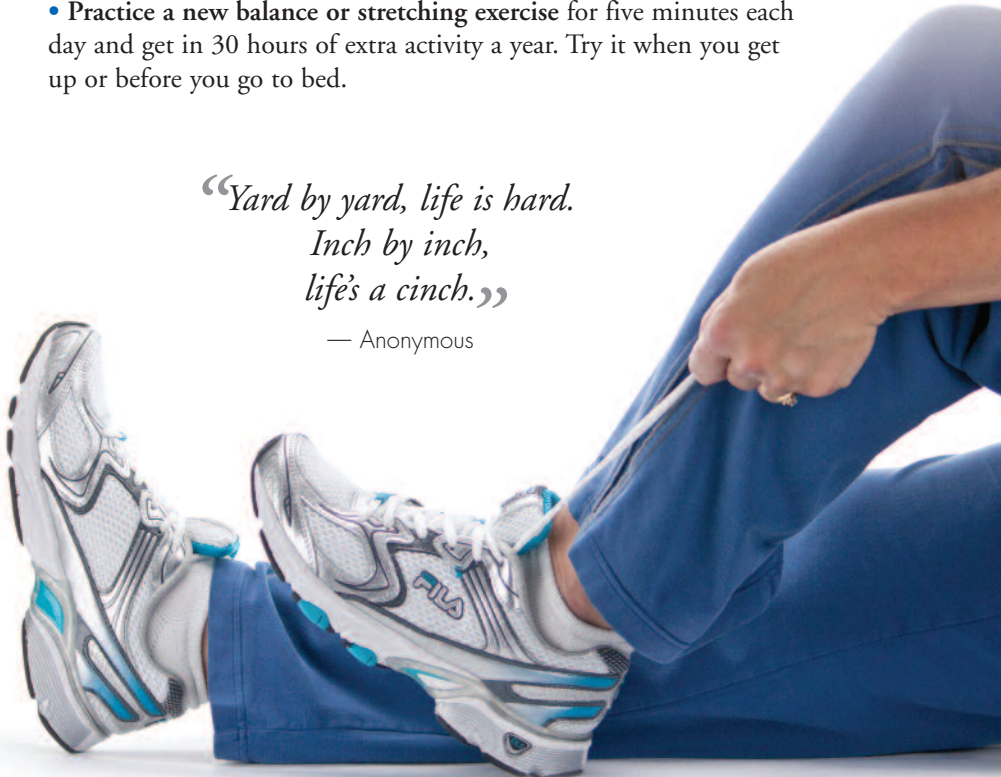
## Small things are really what matter

Want little daily lifestyle tweaks that can greatly improve your quality of life? Here are some simple ideas:

- **Walk just 1/2 mile extra per day** and log more than 180 miles extra a year. Mark it off and do it at the same time each day. Bring your dog along if you have one.
- **Trim 100 calories per day.** Cut down, don't eliminate, a favorite snack. It will end up saving you 36,500 calories and more than 10 pounds each year.
- **Go technology-free for one hour each day.** Spend that 60 minutes relaxing and rejuvenating. By the end of the year, you'll have spent more than 15 days in your calm place.
- **Volunteer two hours weekly.** Commit to the schedule — no more, no less. You'll give more than four days of time in a year.
- **Practice a new balance or stretching exercise** for five minutes each day and get in 30 hours of extra activity a year. Try it when you get up or before you go to bed.

*“Yard by yard, life is hard.  
Inch by inch,  
life's a cinch.”*

— Anonymous



### Healthcare Changes Coming to Michigan

**Governor Snyder has been very busy building new legislation that will hopefully make healthcare more affordable in our great State of Michigan.** It is clear that our state has one of the best healthcare delivery systems in the country. We all have access to providers who are on the cutting edge of medical science that saves lives every day. Unfortunately, this system is costly and sometimes confusing.

Governor Snyder's strongest message is that "we must build a healthier Michigan." Wellness and economics are linked. By building communities that support health and wellness, we will all live healthier, more productive lives.

Here is a list of some of Governor Snyder's priorities as he implements this new wellness legislation:

- Infant mortality and teen pregnancy
- Obesity, nutrition and food safety
- K-12 adoption of more physical activity and improved nutrition
- Company wellness programs
- Oral health
- Senior population growing
- Tobacco use
- Improved access to healthcare providers

His main goal is to arm all levels of government and the private sector with the tools to obtain healthier lifestyles so that we, the consumers, can begin to benefit from reduced healthcare costs.

*Joe Brogger II, CBC  
Director, Private Sector Employee  
Benefits, Burnham & Flower  
Insurance Group*

## Nuts About Nuts

Nuts and seeds add great crunch and flavor to salads, trail mix, veggie burgers, and sauces. Nuts and seeds are also nutritious and may help with some disease prevention (unless you have a nut allergy, of course). Here are a few to try:

**Walnuts** – Contain omega-3 fatty acids, which may slow plaque growth in arteries. Walnuts also contain antioxidants, which help to reduce damage to cells. Walnuts' fiber and protein may help satisfy hunger, helping you feel full longer. One ounce equals 14 walnut halves.

**Almonds** – Excellent source of manganese and vitamin E; good source of magnesium, copper, phosphorous, and fiber. One ounce equals 20-24 almonds.

**Flax Seeds** – Contain omega-3 fatty acids, fiber, vitamin E, and calcium. They are also low in saturated fat. Because the omega-3 fatty acids are in the seed, you will need to grind them to get the benefit. You can then add the ground seeds to dough or batter, sprinkle on cereal or yogurt, or throw into a smoothie. One ounce equals 2 tablespoons.

Source: American Dietetic Association

## Squirreling away nuts and seeds

Because nuts and seeds contain high levels of unsaturated fats, they can spoil if not stored properly.

- **Keep them in a cool, dark place** in glass or plastic jars to prevent them taking on strong odors or flavors from surrounding foods.
- **Nuts and seeds can also be kept in the refrigerator or freezer.**
- **Nuts kept in the refrigerator and freezer can last up to one year and two years, respectively.**

Source: University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources



### Apple Salad with Pecans & Pomegranate

- 1/4 cup pecans, toasted • 1 large apple, washed • 1/2 bulb fennel (or 2-3 stalks celery) • 1/2 cup pomegranate seeds • 2 Tbsp. lemon juice • 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil • Salt and pepper to taste

**Directions:** Wash and divide fennel, reserving half. Place cut side down on cutting board and slice thinly. Chop apple into thin planks (think 1/2-inch thick matchsticks). In a bowl toss fennel, apple, pecans, and pomegranate seeds. Mix lemon juice and olive oil. Drizzle vinaigrette over salad, season lightly with salt and pepper. Mix well. **Serves 4.**

**Per serving:** 180 calories, 1.5 g protein, 18.5 g carbohydrates, 12.7 g fat (1.5 g saturated fat), 16.4 mg sodium

# Get Moving

## Fiscally and fashionably fit

Here's how to look good, be comfortable, and not spend a fortune when you exercise:

- **First, determine a budget.** How much total can you, or do you want to spend?
- **Then, buy the best clothing and equipment** you can with the money you have to spend.
- **Spend the majority of your budget on key pieces** for your chosen activity. *For example:* a helmet and bike shorts for cycling, sturdy swimsuit and well-fitted goggles for swimming, or supportive shoes for walking/running. The resulting comfort and durability will be well worth it.
- **Choose accessories** (*hats, dark glasses, socks, vests*) that you can use every day, and get extra mileage from them.
- **Always let comfort and fit be your guide.** Clothes that are too small/tight or too big/baggy tend to hinder activity. Plus, getting out the door may be easier when you feel good about what you are wearing.



## Hiring a cyber trainer

You can get e-everything, including personal trainers. If you head online for a trainer, here are questions to ask:

- **Does the trainer have a college degree** in an exercise-related field and/or is the trainer certified by a well-respected organization such as the American Council on Exercise (ACE)?
- **Does the trainer have experience** with your age group or particular needs or health challenges?
- **Are sample workout plans thorough** and detailed (weight, sets, repetitions, intensity)?
- **Does the site/trainer provide** a way to visually communicate proper exercise technique?
- **Is the trainer physically fit?**

Source: American Council on Exercise

## Commute to work? Don't just sit there!

Turn travel time into muscle-toning time (*NOTE: Don't practice these while actually driving, just when you're at a light or stuck in traffic*):

- **Glute squeezes** – While sitting or standing, squeeze glutes as tight as you can. Hold for five to 10 seconds.
- **Ab vacuum** – Just like it sounds, pull your belly in toward your spine. While holding it tightly, suck abs upward (*as if you are tucking it under your rib cage*). Hold for five to 10 seconds.
- **Hold your ground** – A good core challenge. Instead of sitting on the subway, train, or bus, stand firmly with both feet about hip-width apart. Try to keep your entire body sturdy and balanced for the entire ride. Be sure there is a handle nearby for safety purposes or in case of a quick stop.
- **Chest press** – Hands at 3 and 9 o'clock on the steering wheel (*or palms together in front of your chest*). Now, press in toward the steering wheel or press your palms tightly together. Hold for five to 10 seconds.



# Physical Health

## The lowdown on low blood pressure

High blood pressure is a condition affecting 30% of American adults; but what about the opposite problem, low blood pressure? Hypotension occurs when the blood pressure during and after a heartbeat is much lower than normal.

Because there's a range of normal blood pressure from 90/60 millimeters of mercury (Hg) to 120/80 mm Hg, everyone has a different low blood pressure. A drop of just 20 mm Hg can result in symptoms.

### What causes low blood pressure?

- Changes in heart rhythm
- Dehydration
- Severe infection
- Blood loss
- Heart failure
- Common drugs, including anti-anxiety medications, some antidepressants, diuretics, and pain killers

### Symptoms include:

- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Fainting
- Blurry vision
- Confusion

Although severe low blood pressure is a medical emergency, most cases of low blood pressure can pass by sitting down and raising your feet above heart level.

### To prevent low blood pressure episodes:

- Get up slowly after sitting for long periods of time
- Avoid alcohol
- Drink water

Source: *PubMed Health*

## Help for heartburn

- Place 6- to 9-inch blocks under the legs at the head of your bed to raise it. Being slightly elevated can keep stomach acid where it belongs — in your stomach.
- Try to eat at least two to three hours before lying down. Take naps sleeping in a chair to avoid stomach acid from creeping up.
- Eat low-fat, high-protein foods.
- If you're overweight, lose weight.
- Avoid overeating, chocolate, and alcohol.
- Avoid tight belts and tight clothes.
- If you smoke, quit.

Source: *The American Academy of Family Physicians*

## Quit by STARTing

Each year, 3 million Americans quit smoking. It can seem overwhelming, but if you decide you want to stop more than you want to continue smoking, you've taken the first step and are ready to START the quitting process.

**S = Set a quit date.** Once you've picked a day, mark the calendar.

**T = Tell family, friends, and co-workers** about your plans to quit. By letting others know, they can support you.

**A = Anticipate and plan** for challenges. Your first three months may be tough. You may be tempted to start smoking again. If you know how to handle these times before they happen, you may be able to make it through easier.

**R = Remove cigarettes** and other tobacco products from your home, car, and work. While you're at it, get rid of the smoky smell, too. Clean your drapes and clothes. Shampoo your car's interior. Make all your environments smell fresh again. Go to your dentist for an exam, cleaning, and to try to have stains removed.

**T = Talk to your doctor** about quitting. Doctors can answer questions and recommend medicine to help withdrawal symptoms.

For more on quitting smoking, go to [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov) or [www.becomeanex.org](http://www.becomeanex.org)

Source: [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov)

*“When all else fails, stop using ‘all else.’”*

— Unknown

# Emotional Health

## Forgive to feel good

Letting grudges go can reduce anger, stress, and depression. The act can also improve relationships and even have a positive impact on physical health.

### 9 steps to forgiveness:

- 1. Understand where the hurt is.** It's probably coming from your mind, not the offense.
- 2. Commit to forgive** as a way to make you feel better.
- 3. Define forgiveness** as the peaceful feeling that comes from knowing life doesn't always go your way.
- 4. Recognize and share** with trusted friends what has hurt you.
- 5. Use simple relaxation techniques** like deep breathing when the hurt flares.
- 6. Stop expecting things from others.** Work for your own health and peace.
- 7. Avoid reliving the hurt.** Find a better way to get what you want.
- 8. Focus on your personal power** by living a loving and kind life.
- 9. Change the story of your pain** to include your strength to forgive.

Source: Dr. Frederic Luskin, Director of the Forgiveness Project at Stanford University

## Anxiety antidotes

Don't let anxious thoughts spiral out of control. Use these techniques to prevent an uneasy feeling from going any further and to help reduce anxiety to a minimum.

- **Each day, take 30 minutes to think about concerns.** Save any worrying for this designated time. This may help you to think less about what might happen and focus more on what's happening right now.
- **Keep caffeine consumption in check.**
- **Deal with anxiety-causing issues from your past** so they don't cause you anxiety in the future. Picture how you will deal with these factors if they come up again. This exercise can help you deal with them for real.

## Laugh for the health of it

We all know a hearty laugh is good for the soul, but did you know it's scientifically proven to be good for your heart, too? Researchers at the University of Maryland School of Medicine have linked laughter with blood vessel dilation, allowing for increased blood flow.

### Boost the humor in your life.

- **Smile more.** A happy facial expression may lead others to grin back.
- **Make a list of your blessings.** Keeping track of everything good in your life may keep your mind off negative thoughts. Laughing in a grateful state is much easier than in a burdened one.
- **Gravitate toward laughter.** People are generally happy to share what makes them laugh because they can enjoy it again with you. Never hesitate to ask, "What's so funny?"
- **Seek out funny friends.** Spend as much time as possible with people who make the little things in life funny.
- **Add a few giggle-inducing tasks** to your routine. Read cartoons, play with kids, host a game night, and sing karaoke.

Source: University of Maryland Medical Center

*“Every day may not be good, but there's something good in every day.”*

— Unknown

# Fiscal Fitness

## Extended warranties worth the expense?



It depends. An extended warranty (*a.k.a. service contract*) is bought separately from a purchased item (*e.g., television or computer*). Like term life insurance, it only covers the item for a specified time period. Consumer advocates often advise against extended warranties because:

- **Barely 10% ever get used.** Appliances and electronic items generally don't need repairs during the covered time period (usually two to five years from purchase).
- **They are expensive** and can increase the item's purchase price by up to 20%.
- **The cost is generally the same as a typical repair bill**, which may not ever be needed.
- **They often contain exclusions** such as accidental damage (*e.g., spilling coffee on a laptop computer*) or normal wear and tear.
- **Free warranty coverage may already be provided** by the manufacturer or a credit card rewards program.

Some products, however, may be good candidates for extended warranties due to their service repair history and cost. According to Consumer Reports, these items include treadmills and elliptical trainers, laptop computers, and plasma and LCD televisions. People who would have difficulty paying to repair or replace a needed item might also want to consider an extended warranty.

## File it away

*Organize your financial records:*

- **Designate a record-keeping location** – Use a two-drawer filing cabinet or deep desk drawers.
- **Purchase filing materials** – Use plain manila folders, hanging file folders, and/or accordion files.
- **Categorize records** – Separate active records from inactive (*archived*) documents you will keep a long time. Active records include bank and investment account statements, insurance policies, medical records, and warranties. Inactive records include real estate documents, Social Security information, retirement savings statements, and copies of wills.
- **Rent a safe deposit box** – Store securities and documents that would be difficult to replace (*e.g., marriage certificate, adoption papers, burial plot papers, and auto titles*).
- **Back up taxes** – Keep records related to tax-return entries at least three years after filing (*six years is better*). After paying taxes, place all supporting documents in a single folder.
- **Know what goes** – Shred reconciled bank deposit slips, paid utility bills, expired warranties and service contracts, and credit card slips after reviewing your billing statement.

## Click & Send: The benefits of online bill paying

- **Convenience** – It's easy to pay your bills or those of elderly parents who live far away.
- **Cost** – Banks often encourage online payments to reduce costs. Many accounts are free or low-fee, plus you eliminate postage expenses.
- **Safety** – Online bill payers avoid frauds that occur when checks and/or account statements are stolen from mailboxes.
- **Security** – Online transactions are encrypted to reduce identity theft risk. Always use a "strong" password with upper- and lowercase letters and numbers.
- **Timing** – Payments can be made close to the due date because you don't have to rely on mail service.

# Issue Insight

## Filling your toolbox: Online resources for healthy living

Find more health and wellness information and tools online by logging onto [Nov.HopeHealth.com](http://Nov.HopeHealth.com). Or, scan the Quick-Response Code at the right with your smartphone to get there.

Here's what you'll find at [Nov.HopeHealth.com](http://Nov.HopeHealth.com):

- *Print-and-post tip sheet on nut nutrition*
- *Smoking cost calculator*
- *Type 2 diabetes assessment*
- *Anxiety assessment*

Scan with your smartphone



Need the reader? [QRcurious.com](http://QRcurious.com)

## Diabetes' magic pill: A new lifestyle

*November is American Diabetes Month.*

Diabetes affects almost 26 million Americans. Another 79 million have prediabetes. Christine Cross was one of them.

Over the years, the craziness of life meant

Christine couldn't and didn't focus on what she ate and what she did for physical activity. Then, one day, Christine received her wake-up call. Like many people, diabetes runs in her family. Her doctor said if she didn't change her lifestyle, she would be battling the disease, too. She saw a dietitian, then a personal trainer. She lost 66 pounds, became more toned, and increased her strength and energy levels.

**Q:** *What advice do you have for others battling diabetes or who could find themselves fighting it soon?*

**A:** *It takes determination to change your ways. Most people want an overnight fix. A lifestyle change isn't an overnight fix. The whole issue of diabetes, what you have to do, what you can't do, is really overwhelming and you feel like your life is no longer yours. You have to decide "I'm going to take control." You know you have to have positive words, too. I didn't call it a diet. Diet is another term for failure.*

For more information on diabetes, visit [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org).

## Saving on skin care

*November is National Healthy Skin Month. Taking care of your outside doesn't have to be costly.*

- **Cleanse, treat, and prevent.** You brush your teeth twice a day, but how often do you give your skin TLC? Don't go 12 hours without using some treatment or product on your skin. Sunscreen counts.
- **Use sunscreen every day** – even in the winter. This helps prevent sun damage that could lead to wrinkles, age spots, or even skin cancer. Rays can travel through windows, so if you spend significant indoor time near a window, apply sunscreen.
- **Use body moisturizer.** Especially during the winter, apply it to damp skin as soon as you finish showering to lock in moisture.
- **Use petroleum jelly for:**
  - Moisturizing rough, cracked feet, elbows, and hands; dry cuticles and lips; and peeling nails
  - Preventing chafing
  - Protecting scrapes and bumps
  - Applying as a diaper ointment

Source: *American Academy of Dermatology*



# HOPEHealthLetter



## Leftover lowdown

After finishing the Thanksgiving feast, the question becomes what to do with all the leftovers.

- **Put food away within two hours.** Bacteria rapidly begin to multiply at this point.
- **Store leftovers in airtight, shallow containers (2-inches deep or less).**
- **Remove turkey from the bone.** Store it separately from the stuffing and gravy.
- **Use refrigerated, cooked turkey within three or four days.**
- **Use stuffing and gravy within one or two days.** Leftover casseroles and cooked vegetables are usually fine for three to four days.
- **Finish fruit and cream pies within two to three days.** Cheesecakes within a week.
- **Reheat any leftovers to 165 degrees.** Bring gravy to a steady boil on the stove before serving it a second time. Microwaving leftover gravy until hot is not enough to kill harmful bacteria.

Source: *American Dietetic Association*

“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.”

— Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*

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The information in this publication is meant to complement the advice of your health-care providers, not to replace it.

Before making any major changes in your medications, diet, or exercise, talk to your doctor.

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