

# Healthy Habits

## Distracted Driving

Is texting worth risking your life — or someone else's?

That may seem like an easy question to answer. Sadly, though, thumbing away on a smartphone has become a standard driving pastime, despite all the warnings and laws.

Anyone who drives anywhere can witness the dangerous behavior of many people using mobile devices while driving. Toss in other driver distractions such as eating or grooming, and you've got the makings for a roadside tragedy.

### Are you guilty?

- Leave calls, checking e-mails, and other distractions until you park the car.
- Make a silent promise to yourself to drive safely from now on.
- When you drive, drive.

### Set a good example for others, too.

- Have heart-to-heart talks with the other drivers in your life about paying attention to the world around them when behind the wheel.
- Make sure your kids know the rules of the road.

For safe driving tips, go to  
[www.DistractedDrivingSafetyAlliance.org](http://www.DistractedDrivingSafetyAlliance.org).

## Sort and purge

Do you keep notes and printouts of interesting information because you think you may someday need them for something? Is that pile getting overwhelming?

Go through your pile of "stuff" and look at each item to determine what you should keep and what you can toss. For each item, ask:

- Is this idea or information still important to me?
- Can I retrieve this information from elsewhere should I ever need it?
- Is this information duplicated somewhere else?
- Will this information or idea help me reach one of my goals?

Source: *The High Achiever's Guide to Getting Things Done*, by Joelle Jay, PhD

*"A smile is a curve that sets everything straight."*

— Phyllis Diller

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# OuterAisle Fresh

## Score nutritionally

Friends, football, and food — a fall tradition. This year, transform your traditional tailgate menu into a healthier, sustaining meal before kickoff. And don't forget to transport and store food properly to avoid food-borne illnesses.

Here are a few simple menu lineup changes that may decrease the fat and sodium in usual tailgate fare and increase the antioxidants, healthy fats, and fiber.

- **If you're the chili type**, go vegetarian and replace meat with seasonal squash chunks.
- **Skip chips and fatty dips**. Instead, nibble on fresh vegetables and hummus.
- **To make fruit or vegetables more spirited**, build kabobs with colorful selections representing your team colors if you can.
- **Switch out cheese and crackers** in favor of low-fat cheese cubes with unsalted nuts, dried fruit, and grapes.
- **Throw skinless chicken or turkey burgers on the barbecue**. Use low-fat Italian or honey mustard dressing as a marinade.
- **Grill skewered peppers**, mushrooms, and tomatoes for a delicious side dish.

Food safety becomes a big concern when you are moving coolers and dining out of the trunk. Planning ahead is the best defense against spoiling and cross-contamination.

- **Pack a separate drinks cooler** so the food cooler is opened less frequently.
- **Keep cold food below 40 degrees** and hot food above 140 degrees to curb bacteria growth.
- **Transport raw meats in sealed containers**, and move them from cooler to grill quickly.

Sources: Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences Cooperative Extension; Thomas Jefferson University Hospital; West Virginia University Extension Service

## Brown baggin' it

If you eat a packed lunch from home, remember that although paper bags are convenient and inexpensive, they don't keep cold foods cold or hot foods hot.

Metal or plastic boxes are sturdier, but it's still tricky to control food temperatures.

Insulated lunch bags tend to be the best choice. Some come with freezer packs. Some have two or more compartments to separate foods and beverages.



### Grilled Pepper Poppers

- 1/2 cup (4 oz.) soft goat cheese • 1/2 cup (4 oz.) fat-free cream cheese, softened • 1/2 cup (2 oz.) grated fresh Parmesan cheese • 1/2 cup finely chopped seeded tomato • 2 Tbsp. thinly sliced green onions • 16 jalapeño peppers, halved lengthwise and seeded • Cooking spray • 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- Directions:** Heat grill to medium-high. Combine first five ingredients, stirring well. Spoon 2 teaspoons cheese mixture into each pepper half. Place pepper halves, cheese side up, on grill rack coated with cooking spray. Grill five minutes or until pepper bottoms are charred and cheese is lightly browned. Place on a platter. Sprinkle with cilantro. **Serves 16:** 42 calories, 2.6 g fat, 6.3 mg cholesterol, 123 mg sodium, 1 g carbohydrate, 3.7 g protein

# Get Moving

## Bone up on exercise

Just as regular activity helps strengthen muscles, the same is true for the effects of exercise on bones.

Although working out is important at every age, it becomes even more so after age 30, when bones naturally start to become weaker.

Weight-bearing exercises have been shown to strengthen bones most effectively. These are movements that place weight on bones, such as:

- Walking, jogging, or running
- Hiking
- Aerobics
- Climbing stairs
- Dancing
- Household chores and yard work
- Playing tennis or racquetball

Resistance exercises also improve bone strength. You can use free weights, weight machines, and elastic tubing for resistance work.

“Any exercise is better than none,” said Carl Wierks, MD, orthopaedic surgeon. “Non-weight-bearing activities such as swimming, bicycling, yoga, and Pilates can also help overall health and strength, if done regularly.”

Shoot for about 30 minutes of weight-bearing exercise, three to four times weekly, with resistance training two to three times each week.

Source: Carl H. Wierks, MD, an orthopaedic surgeon in Holland, MI, physician for the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Teams

## Powerful reasons to exercise with your partner

1. **Creates “us” time.** When you work out together, it doesn't feel like a chore. It's an activity you can share that creates a bond.
2. **Keeps you motivated.** When one of you is tired or feeling lazy, the other can cheer you on.
3. **Shows you care.** Investing time and energy in fitness says, “I love you.”
4. **Reduces stress.** Life — and relationships — can be stressful. Working out with your partner can help you to relax.

Sources: Aniela and Jerzy Gregorek, authors of *The Happy Body: The Simple Science of Nutrition, Exercise, and Relaxation*

## Far from a fitness fad

People throughout the world have practiced yoga for more than 5,000 years. It's estimated that more than 13 million people in this country use yoga.

It's not fully known what bodily changes occur during yoga, whether they influence health, and if so, how. However, evidence suggests yoga does work to help with stress and mind-body awareness.

### A couple of yoga techniques for beginners:

- **Behind the back arm hold:** Bring arms together behind you, grabbing opposite forearm with each hand. Grasp as close to each elbow as you comfortably can. Pull shoulders back and down, lift chest. Hold position for five deep, slow breaths.



- **Lower body let go:** Start in a deep lunge position with fingertips touching floor on either side of front foot. Slowly straighten both legs. If fingertips don't touch the ground when legs are straight, slightly bend front knee. Keep torso squared, and breathe deeply in this position for a minute or two. Switch legs and do again.



Source: National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine



# Physical Health

## Help for heel pain!

If you wake up to burning, stabbing, or aching pain in your heel, you could have plantar fasciitis (plan-tar fash-ee-eye-tis). It's a condition where

the plantar fascia ligament on the bottom of your foot develops tears leading to inflammation and pain. The pain tends to be worse in the morning because your ligament tightens during the night.

If you develop plantar fasciitis, rest and ice the area to prevent mild aching from turning into a chronic problem. If you don't take it easy, you may change the way you walk to deal with increasing pain, which can lead to knee, hip, or back pain.

### How can you prevent it?

- **Maintain a healthy weight** to reduce tension on the ligament.
- **Wear good shoes that provide cushioning and support** throughout the heel, arch, and ball of the foot.
- **Replace old shoes** before they wear out, especially shoes you use for running or exercising.
- **Avoid walking barefoot** on hard surfaces.
- **When exercising**, start slow and ease into new routines.
- **Keep your calf muscles** and the tissue of your feet stretched.

Source: Carl H. Wierks, MD, an orthopaedic surgeon in Holland, MI, physician for the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Teams

## Making sense of Celiac

A rise in Celiac Disease has created buzz about the once little-known protein called gluten.

Gluten is found in wheat, barley, rye, and some oats. Celiac is a disease in which gluten destroys tiny fingerlike nutrient absorbers lining the small intestine. This damage makes it difficult for your body to absorb important nutrients. Untreated Celiac Disease can lead to various problems, from bone loss to cancer.

It's estimated that Celiac Disease affects 1 in 133 Americans. Currently, the only treatment for Celiac is a gluten-free diet. For more on Celiac Disease, go to [www.celiac.org](http://www.celiac.org).

# Keep your gray matter young

**As our bodies age, so do our brains. Help keep your brain sharp at any age.**

- **Think.** Challenge your brain by doing something you don't normally do. Solve crossword puzzles; learn a foreign language or a musical instrument.
- **Eat.** Antioxidant-rich foods do even more than diminish cancer-causing free radicals and reduce inflammation. A glass of tart cherry juice at dinner, for instance, can help stimulate sleep-inducing melatonin receptors so you can rest.
- **Sleep.** Deep sleep shuts down your neurons (the ones you use during the day) so they can regenerate. Sleep can help you make better decisions and manage your emotions. Most adults need seven to eight hours a night, although some people may need as few as five hours or as many as 10 hours.
- **Move.** The brain area responsible for memory, called the hippocampus, usually shrinks with age — unless you get regular aerobic exercise. By walking 40 minutes, three times a week for a year, you could increase the size of your hippocampus by 2% — an equivalent of reversing loss in brain size from two years of aging.

Sources: Keri Topouzian, DO; Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences



# Emotional Health

## The talk about hearing

Do you find yourself shouting at an aging parent or spouse? Has someone you care about withdrawn from activities and socializing because he or she has difficulty understanding what's said? It could be time for a talk about hearing aids.



Hearing loss can be subtle. The people you care about might not realize how much of the conversation they miss, and they don't want to be dismissed as "too much bother." They also may be afraid to "say the wrong thing" if they misinterpret a comment.

### What you can do:

- **Help them understand** that a hearing test could give them peace of mind, improve their quality of life, and protect them from problems that arise when you can't hear, such as when the oven timer goes off.
- **Let them know you love them**, enjoy their company, and want to have quality conversations with them.

To help further answer questions about hearing aids, visit the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Website at [www.nidcd.nih.gov](http://www.nidcd.nih.gov).

Sources: Joan Hofman, MA, LPC, who is hearing impaired; National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders

## Too nice for your own good?

Being nice is a good quality to have, but how do you keep impulses to be generous, selfless, and civic-minded from making you into a pushover who can't say no?

If you're consistently disappointed that people don't treat you as well as you treat them, it may be time for a change. According to Beverly Engel, a psychotherapist and author of *The Nice Girl Syndrome*, "pumping up on the 'four power C's'" can help you overcome too much niceness.

- **Be confident** and trust your abilities, intuition, and opinions. Measure your power by what you think and feel, not how others react to you.
- **Don't confuse competence with conceit.** Celebrate the things you excel at and use all talents to succeed.
- **Speaking with conviction isn't arrogant.** Don't use hedging words like "I might not be right, but..." or end statements with verbal cues and gestures indicating that you're seeking approval.
- **Taking care of yourself takes courage.** Ask yourself questions like "What do I really want at this moment?" and "Will this action be good for me?" before saying yes to or doing something for someone else.

## I'm the parent, that's why

What's your parenting style? One approach, recognized as an effective way to raise children, is to be authoritative (*not to be confused with authoritarian*).

Children raised by authoritative parents are shown to be socially responsible and capable of increased self-regulation and self-control.

Source: NYU Child Study Center

### Authoritative parenting means:

- **Being firm** but not overly demanding and intrusive.
- **Setting defined and consistent limits** and expectations, but considering your children's point of view in the process.
- **Shaping and guiding** children's decisions yet emphasizing natural and logical consequences. This in turn fosters independence and cooperation.

## Avoid these top life insurance mistakes

- **No insurance** — According to the insurance research firm Limra, almost a third of U.S. households have no life insurance — a mistake if you have dependents relying on your income.
- **Not keeping up** — Review your policy periodically. For example, if you have children or receive large raises, you may require additional coverage.
- **Simple math** — Beware of one-size-fits-all “5 to 10 times your annual salary” formulas to determine the amount of life insurance. Be sure to ask for a personalized analysis based on your circumstances (such as the age and number of children and spouse’s income).
- **Insuring minor children** — Children are typically dependents so there’s generally no reason to insure them unless they contribute significantly to family income.
- **Accidental death riders** — Whether you die in an accident or while asleep shouldn’t affect the amount of insurance you buy. These riders are expensive and coverage is limited. If your family needs twice as much insurance to live comfortably, buy a larger policy.
- **Risky lifestyle** — Life insurance premiums are risk-based. You can pay more (or be denied coverage) if you have poor health habits (such as smoking and obesity), a poor driving record, or dangerous hobbies.

## Managing inherited wealth

You inherited money and want to spend it wisely. Consider these suggestions:

- **Start an emergency fund** — Set aside three to six months of living expenses in a safe, accessible account, such as a money-market fund.
- **Eliminate debt** — Repay outstanding balances on high-interest credit cards. Start with those that charge the highest interest. After that, consider paying off your car, student loans, and/or your mortgage.
- **Save for retirement** — Fund a Roth and/or traditional IRA with the inheritance or increase the amount you put into your tax-deferred 401(k) or 403(b) plan. You can then use the inheritance to offset your resulting lower take-home pay.
- **Give some away** — Make a charitable donation to organizations you support and/or those supported by the person from whom you inherited money.
- **Invest in yourself** — Get a college degree or take courses for enjoyment and/or career advancement.
- **Remodel your home** — If you plan to stay put awhile, consider kitchen or bathroom renovations to make your home more comfortable and produce a higher resale value.

Scan important documents onto your computer to make sure you always have them available if something happens to the original.

## Filling your toolbox: Online resources for healthy living

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

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

- *Print-and-post tip sheet* on tailgating tricks
- *Print-and-post tip sheet* on tackling a to-do list
- *Link to a free brain-grade test*

Scan with your smartphone



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



## Family fun and fitness

Sept. 24 is *Family Health & Fitness Day USA* — designed to promote family involvement in physical activity.

Katie Decker is a marathoner and mother of two girls from Louisville, KY, who supports her husband's Ironman training, admires her older daughter's ballet technique, and cheers on her younger daughter from the soccer sideline.

### *How do you incorporate physical activity into family time?*

When my husband needs to swim laps, the girls and I head to the pool and sneak in a little family fun when he's done. You might also find us jumping on the trampoline together. It's fun to share the activity that brings our daughters the most joy.

### *Why is physical activity essential for your family?*

My husband and I relieve stress through exercise. We're better parents and spouses when we take time to work out. We want our girls to learn taking care of your physical health has to be a priority.

### *What is one simple way to blend physical activity with family time?*

Vacation, when work demands and daily schedules are abandoned, is a great time to be active together. We took a bike tour of Washington, D.C., monuments this year and made great memories.

## The whole truth about whole grains

September is Whole Grains Month. The phrase "whole grain" has become a buzzword. Everyone seems to know whole grains are good for you (unless you have Celiac Disease, see article on page 4), but many people don't know why. Here's the skinny on whole grains — what they are, why they're better, and how to incorporate them into your diet.

### What is a whole grain?

A whole grain is the entire seed of a plant. Refining often removes parts of the kernel, which reduces the protein and nutrients.

### What are some examples of whole grains?

Wheat, corn, rice, oats, barley, quinoa, sorghum, spelt, and rye are all whole grains.

### What are the health benefits of whole grains?

Eating whole grains can reduce risks of heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and obesity.

### How can whole grains be incorporated into an existing diet?

- Buy whole grain pasta
- Add bulgur, wild rice, or barley to bread stuffing
- Replace one-third of flour in a recipe with quick oats or old-fashioned oats
- Try whole grain breads

Source: *Whole Grains Council*

# HOPEHealthLetter

## Weight control: **Salad bar success**

Hitting a salad bar for lunch instead of the fast-food drive through can be a way to fuel up without packing on needless calories. However, with toppings such as cheese, bacon bits, oily croutons, and cream-based dressings, the calories can add up quickly if you're not careful. Here are some tips to eat healthy at a salad bar.

### Stick to mostly fruits and vegetables

- The more colorful your salad, the more nutritious
- Add one protein (chicken, turkey, beans, cheese, or tofu)

### Add a sweet side

- Many salad bars offer chunks of melon or strawberries
- Try a handful size of raisins or trail mix

### Skip extra mounds of cheese

- Opt for a small square of feta cheese or tablespoon of grated Parmesan

### Don't give in to creamy dressing

- Blue cheese and ranch dressings can sabotage an otherwise healthful plate
- Use a squeeze of lemon and olive oil, or light vinaigrette

*“The best vitamin to be a happy person is B1.”*

— Unknown

*“Respect yourself and others will respect you.”*

— Confucius

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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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