

May 2, 2010

The Best Prescription for Heart Health

You don't need to join a gym, but you will need to move! When it comes to preventing heart disease, regular exercise is one of the most powerful tools at your disposal, experts say—as potent as statin drugs. Women who exercise briskly at least three hours per week can slash their risk of heart attack by 30 to 40 percent. Heart-pumping aerobic exercise lowers bad cholesterol while raising the good kind, demolishes triglycerides, and prevents plaque from accumulating inside arteries. It also combats dangerous abdominal fat. But you don't need to join a gym. Studies show that exercise is just as effective when done in discrete chunks throughout the day -- climbing the stairs at work, taking a fast walk at lunch, or mowing the lawn.



Taken from ReadersDigest.com

provided by Olmsted County Public Health Services

May 9, 2010

A Strong Case for Strength Training

Undoubtedly the best workouts for your heart are aerobic activities like walking, running, swimming, biking, dancing, or really vigorous housework or yard work. But aerobic exercise isn't the only kind shown to help your heart. Strength training -- the type of exercise that builds muscle mass -- may also be important to your heart (and it's certainly important to the rest of your body). Strength training lowers cholesterol, reduced body fat, guards against osteoporosis, helps protect your joints, and revs your metabolism, since muscle tissue burns calories much faster than fat tissue does. So how much strength training should you do? How does 10 minutes a day sound? If that's all the time you can spare, or you're out of shape now, start with a simple 10 minute workout. Try to do it four times a week. Once you master these moves and your body is ready for a slightly more challenging workout, try a 30 minute regimen. Aim to do it at least twice a week.

taken from Reader's Digest

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May 16, 2010

A Nutty Way to Lower Your Cholesterol



Eat walnuts. Harvard researchers recently reviewed 13 studies and found that walnut-rich diets lower total and LDL ("bad") cholesterol by about 10 points, on average, over the course of one to six months, as well as improve other coronary risk factors. The polysaturated fats, antioxidants, and other substances in walnuts may be responsible for the benefits. The studies found that the walnut-rich diets did not cause weight gain, so the nuts must have replaced other high-calorie foods.

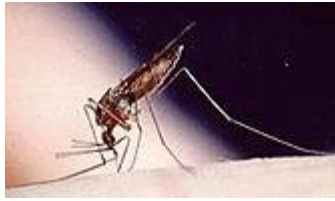
Taken from the UC Berkeley Wellness Letter

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May 23, 2010

In Summertime, the Livin' Can Be Buggy

It's nearly summer which means millions of Americans will be picnicking in grassy fields and camping in the woods. Enjoy the weather, but keep in mind that spending more time outdoors puts you at risk of getting bitten by mosquitoes and ticks.



While the bite is annoying, it's the disease they carry that can become a serious medical problem. Ticks can carry Lyme disease, which is caused by one strain of bacteria.

Mosquitoes are just a warm-weather nuisance, although some people can have a severe allergic reaction to bites and require emergency treatment. Mosquitoes can also carry West Nile virus or transmit encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain. To protect yourself, wear long pants, long sleeves, and socks. Also, repellents containing DEET are highly effective, but repellent used on children should contain no more than 10 percent DEET. Never put DEET on infants.

Taken from Health.gov

provided by Olmsted County Public Health Services

May 30, 2010

Not All Sunglasses Are Created Equal

Price and style -- not protection from the sun's harmful rays -- are most people's main considerations when buying sunglasses, but that's not a good thing. Overexposure to ultraviolet rays has been linked to a variety of problems which can cause blurred vision, irritation, temporary vision loss and, in some instances, blindness. It's recommended that people wear quality sunglasses that offer proper UV protection and a wide-brimmed hat whenever they're outside. To prevent UV-related eye damage:

- Wear UV-protective eyewear even on cloudy days and in the winter.
- Select quality sunglasses that block out 99 to 100 percent of UV-A and UV-B radiation.
- Make sure that lenses are perfectly matched in color and free of distortions or imperfections.
- Select gray-colored lenses because they reduce light intensity, yet provide the most natural color vision.
- Get regular eye exams to monitor eye health.



It's also especially important for young children and teens to have UV-protective eyewear because they typically spend more time in the sun than adults, putting them at greater risk for eye damage.

Taken from health.gov

provided by Olmsted County Public Health Services