



health in action

Germs in the Gym

Do you practice good hygiene at the gym? Most health clubs clean regularly but don't wipe down equipment after each use. To protect yourself from "bad bugs" including the drug-resistant methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) bacteria, **simply follow these tips:**

- Shower immediately after exercising. Wear shower shoes.
- Keep wounds well covered.
- Protect feet with shoes or sandals.
- Wash and dry gym clothes at a high temperature after wearing.
- Don't share towels, mats, clothes or personal hygiene items.
- Wipe equipment handles or dumbbells with sanitizing wipes.



While MRSA in the community is less deadly than that found in hospitals, it can still give you nasty boils or a painful rash. See your doctor right away if you experience these symptoms.

INSIDE :: Take the Plunge

Water workouts are perfect for those who find certain movements on land too jarring or painful.

"All the art of living lies
in a fine mingling
of letting go and holding on."
— Henry Ellis

Got New Year's Weight Goals?

If you've wondered about
the glycemic index, turn
the page to read the article.

Take the Track to Heart

- ➔ **TRACK** down your last blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar screenings.
- ➔ **COMMIT** to your exercise goals by writing them on your calendar.
- ➔ **BREATHE** in deeply often — all the way down to your waistline — and exhale.



in and out: february

Scary Superbugs

Super bugs or drug-resistant bacteria are invading organisms, and hospitals are their favorite breeding grounds. **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends these precautions to take against superbugs:**

- Take antibiotics only when absolutely necessary. Make sure you take the full course of prescribed antibiotics.
- Wash hands several times daily with soap and hot water or use hand sanitizers.
- Never share personal items, such as towels or razors.
- Cover cuts and scrapes with a bandage.
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages.
- See your doctor for an infected wound. Then, carefully follow instructions on how to care for a wound.
- Dry sheets, towels and clothes in a hot dryer (don't air dry) to kill germs.

Grandparents Need Vaccines Too

If you're a grandparent spending time with an infant, you may need to protect your grandchild against pertussis or whooping cough by getting a tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine. **Babies under 12 months** are susceptible to these diseases because they aren't yet fully immunized and so are susceptible to these diseases, as are new parents who haven't received this vaccine.



Try These 'Diets' for Better Health

The foods you eat play a role in conditions such as high blood pressure, unhealthy levels of LDL cholesterol and triglycerides, diabetes, and weight gain. Those all work against good heart health at any age. A few "diets" are recognized as best choices for healthy measures: the **Mediterranean-style diet**, the **DASH Diet** for blood pressure control and the **TLC Diet** for better cholesterol.

Weight Loss and the Glycemic Index



Several popular weight-loss programs are based on the glycemic index (GI), which rates foods on how much they raise your blood sugar. Foods such as white bread that raise your blood sugar more are "high-glycemic." The premise is that if you eat mostly low-glycemic foods, your blood sugar will fluctuate less and you will lose more weight.

THE PROS: Low-glycemic, slow-absorbing foods stay in the digestive tract longer. This may help control appetite and prevent insulin resistance (a condition that increases the risk of diabetes). Many generally healthy foods — whole grains, produce, legumes and dairy products — are also low-glycemic.

THE CONS: The GI can steer you toward certain foods but does not answer important questions such as how many carbohydrates to consume, how to limit calories or fat, or how to eat a balanced diet. Furthermore, the index does not judge the quality of carbohydrates — for example, potato chips or ice cream may rank lower-GI than a baked potato, even though the latter is probably a healthier food choice. In addition, research supporting the GI diet for weight loss remains mixed.

THE BOTTOM LINE: A GI-based diet plan is fairly easy to use and could be helpful for people who want to stabilize their blood sugar, change their overall eating habits or avoid counting calories. But a balanced eating plan may accomplish the same goals. People with diabetes or other health issues should check with their doctors before starting any new diet. A registered dietitian can help too.

LONGEVITY CORNER | Sweet Hearts

A recent article from the British Medical Journal brings happy news: A chocolate a day keeps the heart attack away. Reviewing more than 4,500 research studies involving more than 100,000 people, the authors found that high levels of chocolate consumption could reduce heart disease by 37% and stroke by 29%. **All forms of chocolate appeared to be beneficial.** However, since chocolate often contains hefty amounts of sugar and fat, consider cutting something else so you can have your heart-healthy chocolate fix. Now you can give chocolate as a gift or eat it and feel good about it.

— Zorba Paster, M.D.



Stay Safe on the Road

Driving in wet, wintry weather can be treacherous. If the roads are slippery, keep a slow speed, avoid hard braking and sudden turns, and keep plenty of distance between your vehicle and others around you.



best bites

FRUIT MEDLEY vs. CHEESECAKE

.....
COMPARE

2 cups of fruit (bananas and blueberries) = **218 calories**

TO

1 5.5-oz slice of cheesecake = **1,028 calories**

.....



If you can't ignore your sweet tooth, pass on the heavy desserts and choose the low-fat or fat-free versions, or choose fruit instead.



MILLIONS ACTIVE DAILY!

Swimming is a low-impact exercise that can tone every muscle in your body.

Fit Facts: Water Fitness

Are you ready to take the plunge and try a new fitness activity? How about water exercise?

The buoyancy of water reduces the “weight” of a person by about 90 percent, which means that the stress on weight-bearing joints, bones and muscles is similarly reduced. For this reason, it is unlikely that a water workout will result in injury or leave you with sore muscles.

Aerobic workouts in the pool are perfect for those who find certain movements on land — running, striding, kicking, leaping and even dancing — too jarring or painful.

Keep in mind that in the water, your heart rate will be reduced by as much as 17 beats per minute when compared to land exercise. That’s why it’s so important to pay attention to how you feel. Your heart rate might indicate that your intensity is too low when you are actually exercising quite strenuously.

Once you’ve decided to take the plunge, it’s simply a matter of finding the right class for you. Check with your health club or YMCA to see if it offers aquatics classes. Don’t be afraid to ask about instructor qualifications and safety precautions. Your instructor should be certified and may also have special training in aquatic exercise.

Provided by the American Council on Exercise, www.acefitness.org

TRY ONE THING

Water Adds Resistance

The resistance of water is perfect for a strength-training workout; instead of weights, the water itself provides the resistance. One of the easiest ways to create resistance in the water is to cup your hands and push or pull the water away from you. Other devices, such as hand-held paddles and water chutes, can increase the resistance to provide a more intense workout.

Put Better Fats Into Your Diet



Put **BETTER FATS** to work in your diet. Polyunsaturated (including omega-3) and monounsaturated fats should replace saturated and trans fats. **IDEAS:** Cook with olive or canola oil (sparingly) instead of butter. Add sliced avocado to your sandwiches instead of cheese. Sprinkle nuts or seeds on your salad instead of bacon bits.

Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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Broiled Salmon With Dill

EASY | RECIPE

from Personal Best®

4 tsp Dijon mustard

2 tbsp fresh lemon juice

2 tbsp olive oil

½ tsp minced garlic



4 4-oz salmon fillets,
skin removed

Salt and pepper to taste

2 tbsp fresh dill, chopped

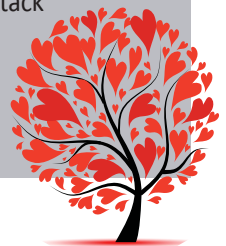
- 1] Set oven control to broil. In small bowl, whisk together first 4 ingredients.
- 2] Spread mustard mixture evenly on top of fillets; season with salt and pepper if desired.
- 3] Spray broiler pan rack with cooking spray. Place salmon on rack and in oven at least 6 inches from heat. Broil 6-8 minutes, depending on fillet thickness, or until fish flakes easily with a fork.
- 4] Sprinkle dill over fillets and serve.

MAKES 4 servings. Per serving:

126 calories | 7.8g protein | 10g fat | 1.5g sat fat | 24.5mg cholesterol | Trace carbs | Trace fiber | 139mg sodium

Know Your Numbers Heart Health

The Framingham Risk Assessment Tool can estimate your heart attack risk during the next 10 years by looking at risk factors such as age and blood pressure. The calculator is recommended for adults starting at age 20 who have not been diagnosed with heart disease or diabetes. During American Heart Month, check your risk at <http://hp2010.nhlbi.nih.net/atp/iii/calculator.asp>. You'll be given a percentage (for example, 14 percent means 14 of 100 people with this level of risk will have a heart attack in the next 10 years). Discuss the results with your doctor or your health care provider.



top health

Self-Care for Aching Feet

What are flat feet? In this condition, the arch on the underside of your foot is flattened, allowing your entire foot to touch the floor when standing. We are normally born with flat feet, but sometimes the arch never forms. Some adults develop flat feet through aging, pregnancy, obesity or injury.

Are they a problem? Fallen arches may pose no problems or they can cause pain in the heel, arch, ankle, back or lower leg. Some people may notice swollen or achy

feet after extended standing or sports.

What can be done? If you have foot pain, have a diagnostic exam with a podiatrist. Bring your regular shoes so the doctor can examine their wear patterns.

Recommendations may include:

- 1 Rest, ice and pain relievers.
- 2 Weight loss if you're overweight.
- 3 Exercises and/or physical therapy.
- 4 Shoes with arch support or shoe inserts.

- 5 Treatment of underlying problems such as broken/dislocated bones or arthritis.
- 6 Injected corticosteroids or surgery if other methods have failed.
- 7 Avoidance of aggravating activities or high-impact sports such as basketball or tennis.

Telltale footprints: You may have fallen arches if you can see the entire outline of your foot when walking on sand or when stepping on a dry surface with wet feet.