

## Weight-Loss Aid: Exercise

**What matters most for losing pounds is consuming a healthy diet.** Exercise is also essential – it helps you lose weight faster, maintain your weight loss and keep it under control.



top health

**Exercise goal:** To aid weight loss and protect health, adults need at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (such as brisk walking) per week. It's not as daunting as you may think. You can accumulate this time in increments of 10, 20 or 30 minutes throughout your day.

For example, 20 minutes on a treadmill, a 15-minute lunchtime walk, 30 minutes of yard work or household chores and 15 minutes of lifting weights add up to 80 minutes of calorie-burning activity.

- Any physical activity that gets you moving and raises your heart rate counts. **Bonus:** Being active throughout your day helps raise your calorie-burning rate.
- To stay aware of your goal, get a smartphone app to track your steps – pace while you talk on the phone or

watch television, or take the dog for an extra walk.

- Use an app to log activity – this helps you reach your weekly exercise target.
- Gradually work up to 60 to 90 minutes of exercise most days of the week. Get your health care provider's OK if you're sedentary, obese or have a chronic condition such as arthritis or diabetes.
- Fit in muscle-strengthening activities 2 to 3 times a week. **Bonus:** More muscle means more calorie-burn.
- Exercise adds energy, mobility and motivation to succeed with your weight-loss plan.

*People who make exercise a habit make time for exercise.*

## Play It Safe With Sports

**After a sedentary winter, we're ready to get out and get active.** Or are we? Before you suit up for your favorite sport, follow these guidelines to avoid getting sidelined with an injury.

**First rule: Be fit enough to perform your sport or exercise.** You're more likely to get injured doing activities that are too physically demanding for you. Even if you already pursue regular exercise, do some pre-sport training for a few weeks by lightly working the affected muscle groups. Ask your health care provider for advice. ➔ Continued on page 4.



take charge

## best bits

■ **Vaccinations against 14 childhood diseases are crucial to giving babies a healthy start in life.** If you have an infant, your child's health care provider can help ensure your little one gets the recommended vaccines for children age 2 and younger. Measles and whooping cough (pertussis) are among the serious diseases children need protection against. During **National Infant Immunization Week** (April 18 to 25), visit the CDC's Infant Immunizations FAQs at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/parent-questions.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/parent-questions.html) to learn more.

■ **True or false:** Moving a long distance away often helps ease seasonal allergy symptoms. The answer is **false**. Many forms of pollen (especially grasses) and mold spores are common to most plant zones in the U.S., so moving provides little relief. Also, your immune system may find new allergens to react to in new environments.

■ **Think of your feet.** Avoid bad-news shoes: You may love flip-flops, but avoid long use; they aren't for all-day wear. Pointy toes and sky-high stilettos? Even short-term wear can cause foot and leg problems. Heels higher than 3 inches put 7 times the pressure on the ball of the foot. And you should never have to break in shoes. They should be comfortable from the moment you put them on for the first time.

*"Every day is a new beginning; take a deep breath and start again."  
- Unknown*

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## 7 Ways to Ease IBS Symptoms

**Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a chronic disorder of the gastrointestinal tract.**

The symptoms are caused by changes in how the intestinal tract works, or fails to work. IBS can cause frequent cramping, abdominal pain, bloating, diarrhea and constipation.

Work with your health care provider to find solutions and practice self-care to relieve or prevent symptoms:

- 1. Identify dietary triggers.** Culprits might include dairy, gluten, high-fat foods, artificial sweeteners, caffeine, alcohol and some medications.
- 2. Add fiber slowly.** Learn which high-fiber foods and their amounts you tolerate well.
- 3. Avoid or limit gassy foods.** These include cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli and beans. The effect of these foods varies among individuals and not everyone with IBS needs to avoid them completely.
- 4. Eat regularly.** Having snacks and meals at the same times each day can help regulate bowel function. Also avoid overeating.
- 5. Use anti-diarrheal medications and laxatives carefully.** They can aggravate symptoms if used incorrectly or without your provider's advice.
- 6. Control stress.** Abdominal pain and diarrhea are common during chronic stress. Try frequent deep breathing, relaxation and counseling – whatever it takes to cope better.
- 7. Exercise regularly.** It stimulates normal bowel contractions and helps relieve stress and anxiety.

**Managing IBS takes effort at first.** In time, your choices should become second nature.



April is Irritable Bowel Syndrome Month.

## Your Health Profile

Here are 3 reasons to keep a record of your health history:

- 1.** To have details handy when you meet with your health care providers, visit an emergency room or urgent care clinic, or stay in a hospital.
- 2.** To help your providers determine your preventive screening needs.
- 3.** To help you and your providers identify lifestyle changes that may impact your health.



### Include these facts in your record:

- Chronic medical conditions with diagnosis dates and treatments.
- Past medical illnesses or injuries with start and end dates.
- Past surgeries with outcomes and dates.
- Medical reports of preventive exams and immunizations.
- Current medications (prescription or OTC drugs, as well as herbal and dietary supplements).
- Any allergies or drug sensitivities.

**Note:** If you have an online patient portal through your providers or health care plan, use it to review your medical care.

**Family history:** Create a chart listing major health problems of your closest family members, and ages of onset – including heart disease, diabetes, cancer and depression.

**Health care records:** Keep your explanation of benefits and paid claims forms for a few years.

**Storage:** Keep a paper or an electronic folder of your health history, including an advance health directive, secure and easy to access.

## Get Screened



**Why do we need routine health exams if we don't have symptoms?** We are fortunate to have preventive tests that check for the most common causes of disability and death – heart attack, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer.

**Even without symptoms for these conditions, screening for them can:**

- provide assurance that you don't have signs of the disorder, or
- confirm that you have a risk for or onset of a condition, such as prediabetes, hypertension or colon polyps.

**Bottom line:** Early detection can lead to early treatment to potentially prevent or reduce complications, or save your life.

**Screening tests are available for:**

- > **Cervical cancer** (Pap test)
- > **Breast cancer** (mammogram)
- > **Cholesterol** (blood lipid profile and heart disease risk assessment)
- > **Colorectal cancer** (fecal occult blood testing, sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy)
- > **Type 2 diabetes** (blood glucose)
- > **Blood pressure** (regular office check)
- > **Prostate cancer** (discuss with your provider)
- > **Skin cancer** (regular office check)



**Follow your health care provider's advice,** and get tested to lower your risk for illness and potentially save your life.



# Winning Breakfast Solutions

eating smart

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

If you start your day with a doughnut or toaster pastry, you're not giving your body the fuel it needs for optimal performance. A sugar rush provides a quick boost, but not sustained energy.

For a morning with better concentration and no rumbling stomach, make sure your breakfast has:

- ✓ Foods with at least 4 grams of naturally occurring fiber, to help you feel full for longer.
- ✓ Some unrefined carbohydrates (e.g., whole grains), for immediate energy.
- ✓ At least 10 grams of protein, for sustained energy.
- ✓ A source of healthful fat, to slow digestion.
- ✓ Fluids to maintain hydration.

Choose whole grains, fruit, nuts and legumes to supply fiber and carbohydrates on your breakfast plate. Bran cereals are particularly high in fiber; some have 12 grams per serving. Your best protein choices include eggs, nut butter, hummus, Greek yogurt, kefir (dairy beverage), low-fat or nonfat milk, fortified soy beverages and cheese.

The easiest way to add some healthful fat to breakfast is with crunchy nuts and seeds, which are great with cereal, yogurt or granola. Try these great breakfast combinations:

- Muesli (whole-grain flakes, nuts and dried fruit) with Greek yogurt.
- Scrambled eggs with whole-grain toast and avocado.
- Oat-based granola or oatmeal with chia and flax, soy beverages and berries.
- Peanut butter and a banana rolled into a whole-grain tortilla.
- Tuna on toast with tomato.



What will you do on your next day off?

## What Top Performers Do on Their Days Off

Have you ever wondered what high achievers do when they aren't working?

Many top performers bring the same discipline and mindset to their days off as they do their workdays:

- > **They get up early.** People who are highly productive tend to be early risers, even on their days off. They greet the day feeling positive, perhaps by exercising, spending time in quiet reflection, or reading.
- > **They limit time wasters.** It's easy to lose an entire day surfing the Internet, gaming, texting, using social media or watching television. **Tip:** Set a time limit for activities that tend to distract you; enjoy them but not at the expense of other things you want to achieve.
- > **They take care of themselves.** Top performers realize that a healthy lifestyle helps them stay productive on and off the job. **Tip:** Regular exercise and a balanced diet help you feel better with added energy to get the most out of your free time.
- > **They follow through.** Top performers set realistic goals. Rather than running around trying to get everything done on 1 day off, they set priorities, spend their time on tasks and activities that truly matter, and avoid procrastinating. They also ask for help with home responsibilities and chores when they need it.



Round out breakfast with a glass of water or caffeine-free tea, and your day will be off to a great start. Be sure not to drink your calories at breakfast with beverages such as juice, soft drinks or smoothies. Liquid foods are not as filling or satisfying as a real food-based breakfast.

**best bites** Tip of the month: **Inulin**

**Inulin, made from chicory root, is a type of fiber that's added to foods to quickly boost their fiber content.** It works as a prebiotic, which means it helps support the growth of probiotics, the good bacteria in our gut. However, it can't replace soluble fiber from foods such as oats and barley, which can help lower cholesterol levels. Inulin does not have that cholesterol-lowering power.

— Cara Rosenbloom, RD

### Apple Walnut Oatmeal

- 1 cup water
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts
- ¼ cup apple juice
- ⅔ cup rolled oats
- 1 cup diced apple
- ½ tsp cinnamon

1. Place water, juice and apples in a medium-sized pot and bring to a boil.
2. Stir in the walnuts, oats and cinnamon.
3. Reduce heat and simmer 5-10 minutes, depending on the consistency you like.

**Makes 2 servings. Per serving:**

244 calories | 8g protein | 11g total fat | 1g saturated fat | 1.5g mono fat | 7.25g poly fat | 0mg cholesterol | 31g carbohydrate | 9g sugar | 6g fiber | 3mg sodium

### EASY | RECIPE

From Personal Best®



**Tip:** Serve with ½ cup plain Greek yogurt to add 12 grams of protein to your breakfast.

## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

Phone: 800-871-9525

Fax: 205-437-3084

E-mail: [editor@personalbest.com](mailto:editor@personalbest.com)

Website: [www.personalbest.com](http://www.personalbest.com)

Executive Editor: Susan Cottman • Advisors: Eric Endlich, PhD; ; Mary P. Hollins, MS, JD; Alice Lockridge, MS; Diane McReynolds, past Executive Editor; Zorba Paster, MD; Charles Stuart Platkin, PhD, MPH; Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP • Editorial Assistant: Erin Bishop • Designer: Heather Burke

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### top safety

## Visibility: A Lifesaver



### Do you work night shifts on the roadside or in construction?

If so, you know visibility is 1 of the most important safety rules. What should you look for in high-visibility safety clothing?

- > **Follow the rules** – Make sure clothing and gear meet OSHA or applicable state requirements. See their websites for specifics.
- > **Bigger is better** – Large, bright colors worn over the entire body provide much better visibility from all viewing directions.
- > **Fluorescent or reflective** – Ideally, it's better to wear something that is both fluorescent and reflective; however, at dusk and at night the reflective part is paramount.
- > **Stripes on limbs** – If nothing else, wear reflective stripes on arms and legs, which can indicate motion on the body, making it easier for drivers and machine operators to notice you.
- > **Don't go undercover** – Make sure you don't cover your high-visibility gear with equipment or other clothing. If you need to wear outerwear, make sure it's also high visibility.
- > **Keep it clean** – Dirty or worn high-visibility gear will result in lower visibility.

### expert advice

– Eric Endlich, PhD

## Q: Signs of a drinking problem?

**A:** Here are some ways to determine if you are drinking too much alcohol:

**If you drink more than a moderate amount** (1 drink a day for women and 2 for men), you could risk becoming addicted to alcohol.

**Are family, friends or coworkers concerned that you overindulge?** They may realize the problem before you do.

**Complete a self-assessment** such as the one in the alcohol section of [www.ncadd.org](http://www.ncadd.org).

**If you miss work frequently, suffer from hangovers at work or are less productive than in the past, you may be developing an alcohol problem.** If drinking has taken precedence over spending quality time with family and friends, or if it has caused health, safety, work, financial or legal problems, it's time to seek help.

**To learn more,** go to [www.cdc.gov/alcohol/](http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/).

## Play It Safe With Sports

➔ Continued from page 1.

### Smart moves everyone needs:

- Progress gradually to protect vulnerable areas.
- Stay aware of what you're doing.
- Add no more than 10% speed or distance per week.
- Stop when you start to feel fatigued.
- Warm up to raise blood flow to your muscles.
- Wear proper shoes and protective equipment when playing.



**Fact:** The most common sports injuries are ankle sprain, groin pull, hamstring strain, shin pain, stress fractures, knee and shoulder injuries, dislocations and tendonitis.

**Expert advice:** Strength training 2 to 3 days a week can help protect your muscles, bones, joints and the connective tissues of the ligaments and tendons and lower your risk of injury.

**If you are injured:** See your provider if you have acute symptoms, can't apply weight to the injured area, or a bone or joint appears deformed. Severe injuries might require physical therapy.

Alcohol  
Screening  
Day is  
April 9, 2015.