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# Newsletter

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## Eat Before and After Workout

Before hitting the pavement for an early morning run or workout, eat a banana, or drink glass of skim milk, advises a U.S. dietitian. Eating before and after physical activity is crucial, says Lona Sandon, assistant professor of clinical nutrition at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas. Eating 30 to 60 minutes before exercise delays fatigue and results in a more effective workout, says Sandon. "The muscles need an immediate carbohydrate source to perform at their best. Exercising on an empty stomach will require the body to make energy from stored muscle protein, thus breaking down muscle," Sandon says. "Decreased muscle mass results in a decreased metabolism, which is what we are typically trying to increase with exercise." Eat something high in carbohydrates and moderate in proteins 60 to 90 minutes following exercise, advises Sandon.

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## Kids TV Viewing Leads to Obesity

Two new studies link TV watching to obesity and shows that parents serve as role models for their children viewing habits. The studies, which appear in the October issue of The Journal of Pediatrics, show the average child watches more TV than the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends, leading to more couch potatoes and less active people. The AAP recommends a maximum of two hours of viewing a day. A study by researchers at the University College London finds each additional hour of viewing as a 5-year-old could lead to an additional 7 percent risk of obesity when they turn 30. Researchers at State University of New York found that 39 percent of girls and 30 percent of parents in their 173-person study watched more TV than the AAP guideline. Parents who watched television were mimicked by increased viewing by their daughters. The girls in the study watched more TV when their parents did not set limitations or their parents also watched a lot of television, the study showed. Girls who exceeded the AAP two-hour limit were 2.6 times more likely to be overweight than girls who watched less than the limit.

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## Music to Soothe the Aching Back

Just think about the power of music: It can bring an isolated person out of their shell, make a sad person feel happy, and provide inspiration and support in time of need. For people who are in chronic pain, a new study shows that music can make a big difference in the way people feel about themselves and their ability to deal with the pain. In the study, 60 people suffering from chronic back pain, neck pain and other conditions were recruited from pain and chiropractic clinics, and divided into two groups. One group listened to music on headsets for one hour per day for seven consecutive days, while a control group did not listen to music at all. Among those who listened to music, half could choose the music themselves, while the other half selected from five relaxation recordings provided by the researchers.

After one week, people who listened to music reported that their pain had decreased by between 12 percent and 21 percent; in the group of patients who didn't listen to music, however, their pain levels actually increased 2 percent. People who listened to music also reported feeling less depressed and less disabled, and felt that they had more power over their pain, than people in the control group. Of course, while this study shows that music can help reduce pain, it doesn't mean that chiropractic care is any less effective. Music is simply another instrument chiropractors can recommend to their patients as a means of pain relief. An adjustment from a chiropractor is one of the best, most effective ways of treating back pain and other ailments - with or without musical accompaniment!.

Siedliecki SL, Good M. Effect of music on power, pain, depression and disability. J. of Advanced Nursing June 2006;54(5)553-562

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## Teen Drunk Driving Down

U.S. teen drunk-driving fatalities have declined 60 percent since 1982, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. In fact, all measures of teen alcohol use decreased significantly from 1998 to 2003, says the NHTSA. The Partnership for a Drug Free America says the progress is due, in part, to education and awareness initiatives coupled with effective law enforcement, retailers' diligence and parent involvement. According to the 2004 Roper Youth Report, 75 percent of teens polled reported their parents were the No. 1 influence in their decisions about whether to drink alcohol.

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## Fat, Cigarettes Make Women Age Faster

Obesity and cigarettes accelerate the aging process -- an average nine years for obese women and seven years for heavy smokers, London researchers say. The research led by Tim Spector of St. Thomas Hospital and reported in the British journal *Lancet*, examined 1,122 women in concluding fat and cigarettes accelerate the demise of telomeres, the caps on chromosomes, in white blood cells. "We've known obesity increases your risk of many diseases, and of dying early. What's novel here is that it seems that fat itself actually accelerates the aging process," Spector told the *Washington Post*. The typical woman's telomeres shorten by 27 DNA base pairs a year, said Spector of the joint research with New Jersey's University of Medicine and Dentistry. Heavy smokers -- those who puffed a pack a day for 40 years -- wore off 200 additional base pairs. Women who are obese, or those with a body-mass index greater than 30, wore off even more -- 240 base pairs. Spector told *Nature* the findings may give people another reason to lose weight or quit smoking.

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## Moms Not Sleeping

Over one-third of American moms are not sleeping well, according to a recent survey. This number is understandable, considering all of the pressures that moms face. New moms often miss out on rest because their kids aren't sleeping through the night, but catching the right amount of sleep doesn't get any easier as moms age. "Sleep can suffer for a number of reasons," says Andrea Herman of the Better Sleep Council (BSC). "Everything from medication to stress to a bed that just isn't comfortable can cause a bad night's sleep." An uncomfortable mattress can contribute to having a tough time falling asleep or awakening with stiff muscles. Mattresses should be checked at least twice a year to make sure they are in good condition. Take the "rest test" by laying down on the mattress to see if you have adequate room and feel comfortable. Moms often need to simply give themselves "permission" to go to bed. Herman says, "It is important to put away to-do lists and worries at least an hour before bed time. Hard as it may be, you need to make sleep a priority." Unwinding before bed helps us prepare our mind and bodies to get a good night's sleep. In addition, some behavioral changes might improve sleeping patterns -- exercising regularly, cutting back on alcohol and caffeine intake and stopping smoking. Any one of these changes can increase the quality of sleep. If you feel that medication is inhibiting your sleep, talk to your physician to see if there is an alternative. Herman notes, "Taking care of herself is a great way for mom to take care of the family."

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## Yogurt Gains Popularity

Yogurt has become a popular ingredient in the United States for everything from toothpaste to pet food to drug cereal. "You'll know it's gone too far when you start seeing yogurt beer," Tom Vierhile, director of Datamonitor's Products NPD Group, a market research company, says that 20 years ago almost 10% of the population reported eating yogurt at least once every 2 weeks. Now, 20% have become yogurt eaters. Sales continue to increase, rising 7% in one year, according to A.C. Nielsen.

While yogurt with live cultures is healthy, one reason for the explosion of yogurt-flavored cereals and other foods is that many people like the taste.

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## Crash Dieting Triggers Hunger

The brain's response to low-calorie diets or all-protein or all-carbohydrate diets is to increase natural chemicals that cause hunger, says a U.S. expert. "Two kinds of appetite exist: metabolic and hedonic -- metabolic appetite is a need for energy or calories. If we restrict calories too severely, the brain's hunger mechanism kicks in, and it's hard to stick with a diet when you are hungry," says Mary Boggiano, a psychologist at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. "Hedonic appetite occurs if we restrict ourselves to only certain kinds of foods, or bland foods, or foods we don't like -- like a lot of people do when they're dieting -- our brain's reward system kicks in and causes us to crave yummy tasting foods." This involves changes in dopamine and endorphins in the brain, the two kinds of chemicals also involved in drug addiction -- these changes can cause cravings for very tasty foods, especially when under stress, according to Boggiano. Boggiano recommends that all adults eat at least 1,200 calories a day; don't skip favorite foods, but limit the amount; and exercise to raise metabolism and decrease hunger.

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## Weight Loss Reduces Diabetes Risk

Older adults who lose weight reduce their chances of developing type II diabetes, British researchers at the University of Newcastle say. The study published in *Diabetes/Metabolism Research and Reviews* based its conclusions on the Newcastle (England) Thousand Families cohort, which followed all 1,142 people born in 1947 in the town until age 15 and re-interviewed 412 of them at age 50. Researchers found that prenatal and infant factors explained less than 5 percent of the variation in insulin resistance.

However, adult lifestyle and body fat explained 22 percent of insulin resistance in men and 34 percent in women, *NewScientist* reported. "People should be living healthy lifestyles from as early in life as possible. But this study shows that it's never too late," said lead author Mark Pearce at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. "If you are overweight at age 50 you can still do something to lower your risk of developing diabetes," Pearce said.

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## Child's Exercise Based on Parents

Texas researchers found children are more physically active when parents encourage it and when their neighborhood is more conducive to it. Dr. Chandra Bhat of the University of Texas at Austin found children who lived in areas with more bicycle lanes or near a park were more likely to exercise outdoors. He analyzed data of travel choices made in 15,000 San Francisco area homes and found neighborhoods as children nationwide exercise less and weigh more. Bhat found 32 percent of children studied use the weekends for physical activity like organized sports or walking or riding a bike to a friend's house.

1. He found boys were more active than girls and also found a difference between ethnic groups.
2. He found Asian children were least physically active and Hispanic children most physically active.
3. Parents who had bicycles in the house had kids three times as likely to use a bike or walk around the neighborhood.

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## TV Watching Toddlers Read Below Average

Children under the age of 3 allowed to watch more than two hours of TV a day have below-average reading abilities by age 6, a U.S. study finds. Children who averaged more than two hours of television a day as toddlers scored 10 percent lower in reading comprehension and short-term memory tests, according to a 10-year study published in the journal Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine.

University of Washington researchers analyzed the test results of 1,700 children under age 6 and found, on average, children under age 3 watched two hours and 12 minutes of television and children ages 3 to 5, watched an average of three hours 18 minutes on a daily basis, the Sunday Telegraph reported. Some television shows for children, which claim to be educational actually had no beneficial effect on toddlers, said study co-author Frederick Zimmerman, of the University of Washington. "We found that shows which target under threes, such as 'Teletubbies,' only entertain and don't educate," said Zimmerman.

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# Sleeping on Back Boosts Breathing Problems

Toddlers suffering from sleep apnea have more respiratory trouble when they sleep on their backs, Texas researchers said contradicting earlier studies. In a two-year study of 60 children up to 3 years old, University of Texas doctors said they established a respiratory distress index, or RDI, for the children with obstructive sleep apnea syndrome, or OSAS. The disorder affects an about 500,000 children in the United States. "Our study indicates that supine sleep does correlate with an increase in RDI as well as with OSAS in patients younger than 4," said Dr. Kevin D. Pereira, professor of otolaryngology. "This finding is in contrast to previous studies that have demonstrated no correlation between sleep position and obstructive sleep apnea in children." The study, published in the Archives of Otolaryngology -- Head & Neck Surgery, found breathing problems increased when a child slept on his or her back more than half the time. Pereira was careful to note the study should not be confused with the practice of having infants sleep on their back or sides to avoid Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

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## Tips for Choosing Childcare

In selecting before- and after-school child care, parents should evaluate the program and the people. "Cost and quality vary greatly with these programs, so it helps to know what to look for," says Susan Walker, assistant professor of family studies at the University of Maryland. She suggests considering:

1. Features such as recreational activities and academic enrichment based on solid principles of youth development.
2. Daily schedules.
3. Staff's education and training in youth development and education.
4. The setting, including space for play, quiet areas for reading, homework or being alone.
5. Playground equipment.
6. Safety, health and food, including quality of snacks and meals.
7. Equipment safety and cleanliness.
8. Supervision, attitude, engagement of other children in the program.
9. Personal needs, such as hours of operation, transportation and cost.
10. Program operation, including check-in/check-out.
11. Objectives and other procedures and policies.

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## Your Pool as Fountain of Youth

The fountain of youth may be found in a pool near you, says an exercise physiologist. Joel Stager, professor of kinesiology at Indiana University, Bloomington, says his study shows regular, intensive swimming can delay the decline of such age markers as blood pressure, muscle mass, blood chemistry and pulmonary function. “We’re starting to find out that a lot of the decline is probably related to a decline in activity rather than aging per se,” Stager says. “The hypothesis is that activity preserves physiological function.” The researchers found swimmers who swam 3,500 yards to 5,000 yards (some 2 miles to 3 miles) three to five times a week postponed the aging process for decades, many until the age of 70. For recreational swimmers, any amount of swimming is beneficial, Stager says.

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## Mom’s Nutrition Affects Child Behavior

Mothers whose 3-year-olds are misbehaving may have eaten the wrong foods during pregnancy, reports a study presented at a San Francisco conference. Dr. Laura Murray-Kolb, a postdoctoral fellow at Penn State, led the study, which found that children born to iron-deficient teenage mothers were less active at age three than children whose mothers were not iron deficient.

“While many previous studies have shown that maternal nutrition affects the physical health and development of the child, this study adds to the growing evidence that a mother’s nutritional status in pregnancy also affects the behavior and personality of the child as well,” Dr. Murray-Kolb said. The study examined sixty teenage mothers, ages 14 through 19, from a mid-size Pennsylvania town. The mothers came from low to mid-level socio-economic backgrounds and had sought prenatal care.

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