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Newsletter

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All Car Seats Are Not Created Equal

Is your booster seat putting your child at risk? Regular automobile seats are not designed to protect children. This is why U.S. law mandates booster seat and seat belt use for small children. The booster elevates the youngster in the seat, so both the lap belt and shoulder harness fit the child more like they do an adult. The purpose of every booster is to prevent injury to a child's vital organs and spine in the event of a collision.

There are two kinds of booster seats. The most basic kind is the so-called backless booster seat. The other type is a seat bottom/back combination: the high-back booster, which also has a head restraint and side head protection to prevent bending of the head and neck in the event of a car accident. A recent study demonstrated that the high-back booster reduced injuries by a very commendable 70 percent, while the backless booster was shown to be no more effective at reducing injuries than seat belts without the booster. So replace those backless boosters right away!

There are a few simple ways to determine whether your child should be using a booster seat. Children should ride in a booster seat until they are at least 57 inches tall (4 feet, 9 inches). Once they have reached this height, if your child cannot sit all the way back against the vehicle's seat back and bend the knees over the edge of the seat, they should remain in a booster.

Your child is precious cargo. It's up to you to ensure that your child is safe while traveling in any vehicle.

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ChiroWeb.com

Maintenance Chiropractic Care Prevents Relapse in Disability, Study Suggests

Maintenance care appears to accomplish exactly what chiropractors have long claimed it does. According to a new study, maintenance care prevents chronic disability in patients with low-back pain. Investigators tracked 2 groups of 15 patients with chronic low back pain. Both groups underwent chiropractic care for a 1-month period. One group received no maintenance care while the other received adjustments every 3 weeks. Nine months later both groups were re-evaluated.

For both groups the pain and disability levels decreased after the intensive phase of treatments. Both groups maintained their pain scores at levels similar to the post-intensive treatments throughout the follow-up period. For the disability scores, however, only the group that was given spinal adjustments during the follow-up period maintained their post-intensive treatment scores. The disability scores of the other group went back to their pretreatment levels.

This suggests that maintenance spinal adjustments after intensive chiropractic care may be beneficial to patients in order to maintain a better quality of life.

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Children Seeing Fewer Anti-Smoking TV Ads

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, a Washington anti-smoking group, says children are seeing fewer anti-smoking ads on television. "The decline is having a measurable impact -- it corresponds to a leveling off in smoking rates among our nation's kids," said Daniel McGoldrick, vice president for research. "Too few states have utilized their tobacco settlement and tobacco tax revenues to properly fund such programs, and states have cut funding for such programs by 28 percent, or \$212 million, since 2002." It would take just 8 percent of the approximately \$20 billion a year the states collect from the tobacco settlement and tobacco taxes for every state to fund tobacco prevention programs at minimum levels recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, said McGoldrick. Only three states -- Maine, Delaware and Mississippi -- funded their programs at such levels in fiscal year 2005, while 37 states funded their programs at less than half the CDC minimum or provided no funding at all, McGoldrick said.

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Exercise Key to Healthy Bones

World Osteoporosis Day is being marked this year by a focus on exercise as a way to strengthen and maintain bones. The International Osteoporosis Foundation celebrated the day in Berlin and launched a 3-year-campaign focused on lifestyle choices. Osteoporosis attacks the bones, weakening the mass and making them susceptible to slight pressure. A new report by the group, titled "Move it or Lose it," highlights the importance of strong bones in preventing problems like broken and fractured bones and lowering rehabilitation times. Professor Helmut Minne, IOF board member and report author, said exercise is key in building and strengthening bones. Bones are living tissues that need to be used or they will deteriorate, the report says. A study in Finland reports young girls who exercise regularly have 40 percent more bone mass than inactive young girls.

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OTC Pain Medication Can Be Dangerous

U.S. physicians said though over-the-counter pain relievers are widely available and require no prescription, they are not necessarily completely safe. The physicians issued the warning in the June issue of the Harvard Women's Health Watch.

Non-prescription analgesics have side effects and can interact with other drugs, dietary supplements, and alcohol. They also have the same active ingredients found in many combination products for colds, flu, and allergies.

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin and ibuprofen reduce pain, inflammation, and fever. Older people and those who take high doses for a long time for conditions such as osteoarthritis are at risk for stomach inflammation, peptic ulcers, and intestinal bleeding. Overuse may also cause ringing in the ears, dizziness, kidney and liver problems, and high blood pressure.

Acetaminophen relieves pain and fever by a somewhat different mechanism than NSAIDs, but it, too, can cause serious problems. For example, taking too much can lead to liver damage. Consequently, anyone who drinks regularly or has liver problems should steer clear of acetaminophen.

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Women Underestimate Calcium Needs

Most U.S. women underestimate their calcium needs by at least half, finds a survey conducted by GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare. One-third of U.S. women are unaware that calcium has any benefits beyond building and maintaining healthy bones, according to Dr. Gloria Bachmann, director of the Women's Health Institute at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

Calcium is a nutrient that is vital for the heart, muscles and nerves to function properly. It also may help reduce the risks associated with conditions like colorectal cancer and high blood pressure. Most adults need between 1,000 and 1,200 milligrams of calcium per day -- teens, pregnant women and postmenopausal women require even more.

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Ten Tenets of Wellness

Wellness always seems to be working at answering one critical question: Why don't people do what they know they need to do for themselves?

Providing people with good information about physical fitness, stress management, nutrition, etc., is important, but insufficient. It is not a matter of lacking information.

When you look at living a healthier life, there seem to be certain factors that have emerged from the last twenty years or so that the wellness movement field has identified.

1. Wellness is a holistic concept. Anything short of that is incomplete and ultimately ineffective. We need to look at the whole person and plan lifestyle changes for mind, body, spirit and environment. Just working at the dimension of wellness that you already like, such as exercising and minimizing the others, like stress management or nutrition, doesn't work in the long run.
2. Self esteem is the critical factor in change. Wellness is caring enough about yourself to take stock of your life, make the necessary changes and find the support to maintain your motivation. Heal the wounds. Find what is holding you back from feeling good about yourself and work through the blocks, not around them. Acknowledge your achievements and express the "real you."
3. Who we surround ourselves with either helps us stretch our wings and soar, or clips them again and again. We tend to follow the lead of our peers and find it hard to "go against the grain." Positive peer health norms encourage wellness lifestyle changes. Mutually beneficial relationships with friends, lovers, family and colleagues who care about us as people are what we need to seek and create in our lives. Rather than being threatened by our personal growth, they support it. Do your friends (partners, etc.) bring out your OK or NOT OK feelings? Giving and receiving strokes are what it's all about. Friends keep friends well.
4. Break out of the trance! Conscious living means becoming aware of all the choices we have and acting on them. It involves a realization that we don't have to run our lives on automatic pilot. We can turn off the television (remember TV stands for "time vacuum"), read labels, turn off the lawn sprinklers when we have enough rain, notice how our food tastes, notice how tense and contracted we are when we drive fifteen mph over the speed limit, etc. It means consciously working on our relationships, life-goals, and maximizing our potential.
5. A sense of connectedness to other people, other species, the earth and "something greater" grounds us in our lives. We are all of one heart. Much of this sense can come out of the land we live on. By identifying with (over)

where we live, getting to know the plants, animals, weather patterns, water sources and the landscape, we

develop not only a love for it, but feel that love returned. Through our commitment to our place on earth we value and protect our environment by the way we live our lives, and by how we speak at the ballot box. Through our contact with the natural world we experience a solid sense of belonging, peace and harmony.

6. We are primarily responsible for our health. There are risk factors of genetics, toxic environments and the like, but our emotional and lifestyle choices determine our health and well-being more than anything else. As much as we'd like to cling to blame and cop-outs, we must be honest with ourselves.

7. From increased self-sufficiency comes the confidence and power that overshadows fear. The Australian Aboriginal people say that when a person cannot walk out onto the land and feed, clothe and shelter themselves adequately a deep, primal fear grips their soul. Recognizing our interconnectedness, we grow tremendously when we can care for ourselves on many different levels. Skills, information and tools that enable us to: choose our food wisely (or even grow it ourselves); become more competent at our career; adjust the shifter on our bicycle; take a hike into a wilderness area; bake bread from scratch; etc., all increase our self-respect and self-confidence. We need to learn these skills and teach them to others, especially our children.

8. As much as we all need time with others, we all need time apart. Solo time, especially in the natural world, helps us relax, de-contract, and get beyond the distractions of modern life that prevent us from really knowing ourselves. There are some powerful reasons that peoples from all around the world have spent time alone (usually in a wilderness setting) in order to gain vision about the direction and meaning in their lives.

9. You don't have to be perfect to be well. Perfectionism often pushes us to feel ashamed and feeds a negative view of ourselves. Workaholism, anorexia and other addictive behaviors can result. Wellness does not mean swearing off hot-fudge sundaes. It just means not b.s.'ing yourself about when you last had one!

10. Play! We all need to lighten up, not take ourselves (and wellness) so seriously. Remember the lessons of the coyote and be playful, even ornery in a non-malicious way. Let the child within out to play. Give yourself permission.

Even with these tenets there is no concrete wellness formula. You have to discover what works for you and add your own tenets to the list.

Michael Arloski, Ph. D

American Holistic Health Association

Kids Eat More While Watching TV

A Penn State study finds children who usually eat meals in front of the television at home eat more in a laboratory setting when they are shown a cartoon. Children who do not watch television at home actually ate less on days when they were shown a cartoon. "The study shows that TV viewing can either increase or decrease preschool children's food intakes and suggests that when children consistently view TV during meals, TV viewing may distract children from normal fullness cues which can lead to overeating in children as it may in adults," said Dr. Lori Francis, the lead researcher. The researchers worked with 24 children and their mothers, giving them lunch on four successive days. On two days, a cartoon of a Dr. Seuss story was shown.

The researchers say that children should not be allowed to watch television while they are eating at home. The study was published by the Journal of the American Dietetic Association.

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Zinc Helps Kids Think

Seventh graders taking zinc supplements for 10 to 12 weeks had better memories and longer attention spans, a North Dakota researcher reports. The study followed 111 girls and 98 boys who received either 0 mg, 10 mg or 20 mg of zinc gluconate each school day for 10 to 12 weeks in fruit juice. At the end of the study students were given tests, such as remembering lists of words to gauge memory or tapping a key on a keyboard as fast as possible to determine coordination. Students who received the highest dose cut their reaction time on a visual memory task by 12 percent versus six percent for those children who received no supplementation. On word recognition they improved by 9 percent versus three percent. Children who received only 10 mg a day, the current Recommended Dietary Allowance for the age group, did not significantly improve performance. The zinc supplements did not appear to improve motor and social skills. The research, done by James Penland of the Grand Forks Human Nutrition Research Center in North Dakota, was presented Monday during Experimental Biology 2005 in San Diego.

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Mysteries of Garlic Revealed

University of California scientists have determined garlic's active ingredients work the same in the same way as the chemicals in chili peppers and wasabi. Researchers at the University of California-San Francisco's Department of Cellular and Molecular Pharmacology said garlic's pungent aroma and its effects on the body, such as dilating blood vessels, are due to a variety of sulfur-based chemicals, especially allicin. Little is known about how those compounds produce their effects on a molecular level, but researchers David Julius and colleagues demonstrated garlic extracts, as well as purified allicin, excite a subset of sensory pain neurons from rats by activating a cell membrane channel called TRPA1. The excited neurons then release brain chemicals stimulating blood vessel dilation and inflammation in rats. The study appears in this week's online early edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

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Glucose Explains Nap After Eating

British scientists say glucose can stop brain cells from producing the signals that keep humans awake -- explaining why many get tired after eating. "It has been known for a while that people and animals can become sleepy and less active after a meal, but brain signals responsible for this were poorly understood," said study leader Dr. Denis Burdakov of the University of Manchester. "We have pinpointed how glucose -- the sugar in food -- can stop brain cells from producing signals that keep us awake." The findings, published in the journal *Neuron*, showed how glucose blocks or "inhibits" neurons that make orexins -- tiny proteins that are vital for normal regulation of a body's state of consciousness. "These cells are critical for responding to the ever-changing body-energy state with finely orchestrated changes in arousal, food seeking, hormone release and metabolic rate to ensure that the brain always has adequate glucose," said Burdakov. Malfunction of orexin neurons can lead to narcolepsy, where sufferers cannot stay awake, and obesity, according to Burdakov.

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