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## Newsletter

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### Stretching the Limits

A surprising number of people believe stretching is a waste of time. Stretching exercises relieve muscle tension, flush lactic acid out of your muscles (lactic acid accumulates during high-intensity exercise, creating that "burning sensation," and can contribute to suboptimal muscle performance), and increase your range of motion for longer strides and better athletic performance. Contrary to popular belief, stretching shouldn't be the first thing you do when you are about to work out or play a sport. In fact, stretching cold muscles can result in pulls and injuries. Your best bet is to start with a five-minute warm-up, consisting of a shorter, less intense version of whatever activity you're about to engage in.

After your warm-up, take a few minutes to stretch your major muscle groups, with a particular focus on the areas you are about to train. Each stretch should last about 30 seconds. In general, there is little benefit to stretches that last as long as 60 seconds. Every workout should end with a brief cool down and stretching routine.

Research indicates that if you only have time to stretch once, you should make time after your workout, when your muscles are warm and responsive to stretching. If you've done your workout right, your heart rate will be at its peak and you'll feel warm and tired. The cooldown lets your heart transition to its normal rate and lets your muscles adjust out of their contracted state, which can help prevent strain and soreness.

Now that you know the benefits of warming up, cooling down and regular stretching, never again underestimate the importance of the first and last few minutes of your workout.

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# Key to Perfect Posture: Find the Right Balance Your mother always told you, "Stand up straight." Although no one has per-

Your mother always told you, "Stand up straight." Although no one has perfect posture, slouching is an all-too-common state that may point to deeper spinal issues. The path to strengthening posture consists of three steps:

Step 1: Posture Consciousness

Have a friend take a picture of your posture. Alternatively, stand straight in front of a mirror with your eyes closed and then, without moving, open them. Take a conscious look at your posture. Observe what is level, what is not, and what is different from one side to the other.

Step 2: Wrong vs. Strong Posture

Here is a simple balance test you can use to test yourself: Simply stand on one foot for 30 seconds. If you cannot balance on one leg for 30 seconds, or if you flail about, your internal perception of where your body is in space does not agree with true reality. As a result, when you move or exercise, your motion is not symmetrical and you will compensate by working some muscles more and others less.

Step 3: Retrain Your Body

By strengthening your posture with 10 minutes a day of posture exercise, along with regular chiropractic care, you can stand taller, with less pain, and actually age better. Daily posture exercise creates an awareness of body placement, helps stretch shortened muscles and ligaments, and gives people the ability to stay active.

Talk to your chiropractor about how posture exercises can help you breathe deeper, reduce stress and give you more energy.

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#### Excessive Multivitamins May Be Harmful

There is no proof that taking a multivitamin -- especially in excess -- ensures better health, and there may be a risk of some harm, a U.S. newsletter warned. The Harvard Men's Health Watch advised that a report in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute this year concluded that there was an increased prostate cancer risk among men using multivitamins. While further study could find no link between multivitamins use and risk of developing localized prostate cancer, they did find that men who take multivitamins more than once a day were 32% more likely to develop advanced prostate cancer and 98 percent more likely to die from the disease. The newsletter pointed out this study -- limited in scope and contradicting other studies showed no connection between prostate cancer and multivitamins -- but it only points to the need for more studies and several are under way. Harvard Men's Health Watch suggests there is a growing body of evidence supplements can be counted on to ensure good health. However, a good diet and other lifestyle changes may help lower prostate cancer risk. They caution against excessive multivitamin use but see no harm from a daily supplement that sticks to the recommended daily amounts of the standard vitamins.

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### Everyone Should Have Home Fire Escape Plan

Only 26% of U.S. families have developed and practiced a home fire escape plan — something the American Red Cross urges all families to do. "In addition to having working smoke alarms on each level of your home, one of the easiest ways to prevent a tragedy is to develop and practice a home fire escape plan," Red Cross preparedness expert Heidi Taylor said in a statement. The American Red Cross recommends that in creating a family escape plan, families should:

ß Identify two ways to escape from every room in the home and practice the escape plan 2x/yr.

ß Select a safe location away from the home where the family can meet after escaping.

ß Consider purchasing and storing escape ladders for rooms above ground level.

ß If someone must exit through smoke, crawl low under the smoke.

ß Before escaping through a closed door, feel the door before opening, and if warm, use the second escape route.

ß If smoke, heat or flames block both exit routes, stay in the room with the door closed, place a rolled towel underneath the door and signal for help by waving a brightly-colored cloth or shining a flashlight at the window.

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## Knee Injuries Most Common in Football

U.S. sports doctors are already seeing football injuries and the most common injury involves the knee, a sports medicine expert says. Dr. Marc Fineberg, chief of sports medicine at the University at Buffalo, says there are already four injuries at the university after a few days of practice. The most common football knee injury is a sprained medial collateral ligament, or MCL, which is one of four ligaments that support the knee joint. MCL injuries usually occur during a tackle or block -- sometimes because of an illegal hit, Fineberg says. Less common, but more serious is a torn anterial cruciate ligament, or ACL, which Fineberg describes it as unraveling like a braided rope. A torn ACL happens most often during a quick change of direction. Fineberg says MCL injuries may be reduced by wearing a double-hinged knee brace. "However, using them remains controversial, but we think they provide added protection against MCL injuries," he says. To reduce the risk of ACL injuries Fineberg suggests conditioning players to be stronger, more flexible and more agile and replacing old Astroturf with newer, more forgiving surfaces.

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### Movie Smoking Influences Teen Smoking

Exposure to smoking in movies appears to be linked with teens' risk of becoming established smokers, a U.S. study found. Dr. James D. Sargent of Dartmouth Medical School in Lebanon, N.H., and colleagues surveyed 6,522 U.S. adolescents ages 10 to 14 about their smoking and movie-watching habits in 2003. Researchers coded displays of smoking in 532 hit movies in the five years prior to the survey, then asked the teens if they had seen a random selection of 50 of these movies. Follow-up interviews to assess smoking status were done after eight months, 16 months and two years. At the beginning of the study, 5,637, or 90 percent, of the teens had never smoked, while 33 had smoked more than 100 cigarettes. By the 2-year follow-up survey, 125 of the participants had become established smokers. The study, published in the Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, found adolescents who were below the midpoint of movie smoking exposure were less likely than teens who were above the midpoint to have smoked more than 100 cigarettes.

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## People Notice Attractive People Instantly

If seeking a mate or sizing up a potential rival, good-looking people capture people's attention in half of a second, a Florida State University study found. "It's like magnetism at the level of visual attention," study leader Jon Maner said in a statement. In a series of three experiments, Maner and colleagues found that the study participants, all heterosexual men and women, fixated on highly attractive people quickly and automatically.

Single people ogled the opposite sex, but those in committed relationships also checked people out,. However, they were more interested in beautiful people of the same sex, the study, published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology found. "If we're interested in finding a mate, our attention gets quickly and automatically stuck on attractive members of the opposite sex," Maner said. "If we're jealous and worried about our partner cheating on us, attention gets quickly and automatically stuck on attractive people of our own sex because they are our competitors."

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### Study: Negativity Is Contagious

Negative opinions cause the greatest attitude shifts, not just from good to bad, but also from bad to worse, a U.S. study found. "Consumer attitudes toward products and services are frequently influenced by others around them.

Social networks, such as those found on the (Internet at) Myspace and Facebook suggest that these influences will continue to be significant drivers of individual consumer attitudes as society becomes more inter-connected," study authors Adam Duhachek, Shuoyang Zhang and Shanker Krishnan, all of Indiana University, said in a statement.

"Our research seeks to understand the conditions where group influence is strongest." The researchers then revealed to participants whether their peers evaluated the product negatively or positively. The findings, published in the Journal of Consumer Research, found that the opinions of others exert especially strong influence on individual attitudes when these opinions are negative. Given the strong influence of negative information, marketers may need to expend extra resources to counter-act the effects of negative word of mouth in online chat rooms, blogs and in offline media, the researchers added.

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## Running Shoes: Pricier, Not Better

Researchers in Scotland contend that cheap and moderately priced running shoes are just as good as expensive ones. First author Richard Clinghan and colleagues of the Institute of Motion Analysis and Research of Ninewells Hospital and Medical School, in Dundee, Scotland, compared nine pairs of sports shoes from three different manufacturers in three different price ranges — cheapest, moderate, expensive — on 43 runners, who were not told of the running shoe prices. Plantar pressure — the force produced by the impact of the sole hitting the ground — was recorded in eight different sole areas using a special device attached to the running shoes.

The study, published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, found there were no major differences among the shoes, irrespective of brand or price. When the runners were asked to rate the comfort of the shoes the ratings varied considerably, but there were no obvious differences among the shoes. Price was no indicator of comfort score, but cheap and moderately priced running shoes were just as good, if not better, in terms of cushioning impact and overall comfort.

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### Boys and Men Worry Less

A U.S. study found females more likely think negative events predict future events and this may explain why women perceive more risk and have more anxiety. The study, published in Child Development, found that children and adults believe negative past events forecast negative future events, however, young girls and women more likely to believe negative past events predict future harm, compared to males. Using a sample of 128 people that included children ages 3 to 6 as well as adults, the researcher tested reactions to stories involving negative events and found female children and adults more frequently explained characters' reactions motivated by possible versus certain harm and more frequently predicted characters encountering someone who only looked similar to one causing past harm would feel worried. Between ages 3 and 6, children increasingly understood how memories about past negative events influence their anticipation of the future, study author Kristin Hansen Lagattuta, of the University of California, Davis, said. "These results are significant because they reveal that knowledge about the impact of past-to-future thinking on emotions and behaviors develops during the preschool years," Lagattuta said in a statement.

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