



"I Walked Off 30 Pounds!"

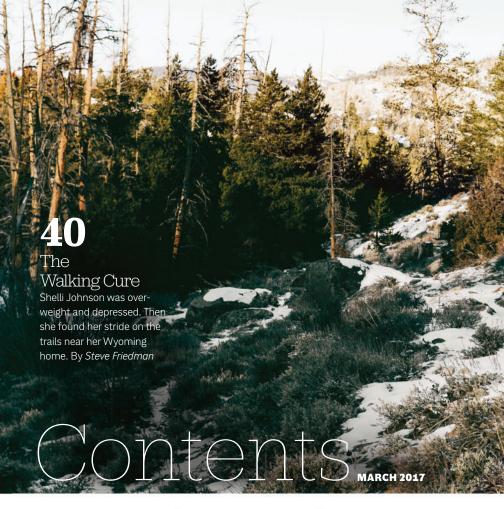
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# Reverse Diabetes

The 4-Step Plan

# **NATURAL CURES**

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- Upset StomachIron Deficiency



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# Walk This Way

EADERS, WE'RE talking walking today. There's little mystery to it; it's just one foot in front of the other. We walk to the car, walk the dog, walk up and down grocery aisles. We're gratified only when we reach our destination. All told, after the glory of our first baby steps, we take walking for granted.

It's an activity that deserves atten-

The path to selfdiscovery can be more joyful with a canine companion like Harpo (above right), our creative director's miniature goldendoodle.

tion, however: We're learning that brisk walking can add years to your life and that walking breakseven 5 minutes' worth after an

hour of sitting-can fight lethargy and curb hunger pangs. For a growing number of enthusiasts, walking it off is becoming a way of life.

On a wooded trail behind our offices in Emmaus, PA, I took a meeting with Polly, Prevention's managing editor-a serious walker who shares her ambulatory adventures with a walking group on the weekends. Courtney, our creative director, takes a different approach to walking, recently spending a week hiking (and cycling) the peaks and valleys of the Andes and the Amazon rain forest in Ecuador. Then there's



Shelli Johnson, the subject of "The Walking Cure" (p. 40), who took up trekking the mountains near her Wyoming home as part of her reinvention strategy. She now coaches other women to do the same.

Whether walking with a group for inspiration or alone for meditation, you may find the simple act transformative. I've begun assembling friends for Sunday forays to local woods and waterfronts. It may be a far cry from ascending Mount Washington after days on the Appalachian Trail, as I did a while back, but it's just right for now. Please write to me at barbara@prevention.com and let me know where your walks take you.

Barban



# Letters to the Editor

Your comments on the January issue

# THE ENERGY FOR HEALING

As a bereavement counselor with a hospice program, I was excited to see this article, in particular your interview with sound therapist Nate Martinez. I've participated in his sessions, and his work is powerful, transformational, and very beautiful.

Debra Oryzysyn / New York, NY

# THINK YOURSELF **HFAITHY**

This article was wonderful, and I plan to try to learn mindfulness for the many reasons cited. However, I was flummoxed

when the author gave "planning what to make for dinner" as an example of daydreaming. Planning dinner is complicated: One must think of what is at hand, what one has to purchase, the time it will take to make, and so on. The writer demeaned a household task as a man would. Margaret Maloney / via e-mail

# **SECRETS OF THE** SUPER HEALTHY

This article has about as much validity as old wives' tales. Healthy people are generally found to not smoke, avoid obesity, eat a reasonably balanced diet, be physically active, get vaccinations, and even drink alcohol in moderation. This is known because it has been thoroughly documented over hundreds, if not thousands, of studies, not because 30 people believed it to be true. David Zamarin /

Henderson, NV

#### **EXPERT ADVICE**

I appreciate the input from experts like Dr. Weil and Dr. Kerner and would like to read more from Dr. Low Dog. I also like your articles that focus on natural

#### **CONNECT WITH US**

Send your comments to letters@prevention.com. We may edit letters and use them in all print and electronic media. Send us your stories and your coloring page (the "work"). Send your personal story to readerstories@prevention.com. To submit artwork, visit prevention.com/art-submissions. For all submissions, please include your full name, address, e-mail address, and phone number. We regret that we cannot acknowledge or return work. Must be US resident and at least I8. By submitting your work, you agree to grant Rodale Inc. permission to use the work worldwide for any purpose, including promotional purposes, in any form of media.



Coloring page submitted by Natalie Noble of Fairfax, VA. Find more to color on p. 96.

solutions, as well as articles informing us of new options, procedures, and other medical issues on the horizon. And I like the magazine's size, as it's totally portable a great alternative to a cell phone! Emily Kassien /

# via e-mail

**CHANGE IS GOOD** Barbara O'Dair's Editor's Letter really spoke to me and has inspired me to share my story. While being married and raising five children, I never knew that I had a fear of being alone. After my husband died. I realized I'd been living

in fear my whole life. I took a class at my church that inspired me to push forward with my life. I moved into my own apartment with my dog, and I take daily walks around my neighborhood, relishing the fact that I am finally free. I want the world to look out because I have rebounded and am ready for what life has to offer! Ida Shobe / North Richland Hills, TX

# **SMOOTHIF** OF THE MONTH

I love your monthly smoothie recipes but noticed that you rarely include the calorie count. It would be great to know how many calories are contained in each. Sonja Williams / Bellwood, IL

Sonja, your idea is spoton, and we've taken your advice (see p. 14).

#### **QUESTIONING TOFU**

My husband and I have recently become aware of the potentially harmful effects of eating tofu. It was the cornerstone of

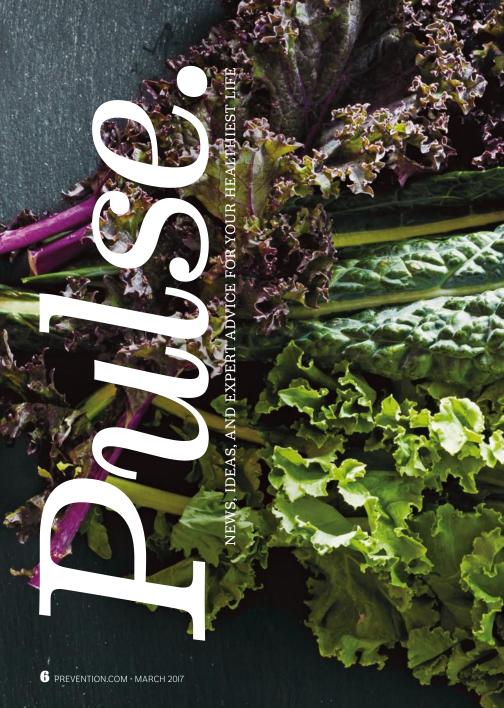
our vegan diet for more than 30 years, and we ate a lot of it. But now we have stopped eating it and feel duped. Could this be discussed in your magazine, with both sides given an opportunity to respond? Cindy Crain / Captain Cook, HI



It matches my flowers and I like to read it #preventionmagazine #pinkroses #bye2016 @unavozparadios / via Instagram

#### **BRAIN GAMES**

Weight loss, healthy eating, meditation, and yoga are all helpful, but how about bringing back the *Prevention* brain games that were online a few years ago? The brain could use some exercise too, and those were fun. Aileen Stiehle / Stuart, FL





# KEEP YOUR SALAD SAFE

Burying your greens in the back of the fridge could increase your risk of illness. British researchers tested several types of bagged lettuce, plus red chard and spinach, over 5 days. They found that the juices released from the vegetables' trimmed edges-as little as 1/200 of a teaspoon—led to as much as 2,400 times more salmonella in the bag. It's best to buy heads or loose leaves, but if you prefer bags, look for ones with the farthest use-by date possible and avoid packages that look inflated or contain mushy greens. At home, remove the greens from the bag and wash them well with cold water to remove any juice. Then place the leaves in a fresh container, refrigerate, and eat within a day or two.

ZACH DESART/OFFS



# STAYIN' ALIVE WITH CPR

Performing CPR is easier now that the American Heart Association recommends hands-only CPR—no long training course needed. To keep it fun, comic actorand medical doctor-Ken Jeong made a video with the AHA (available on YouTube) that teaches CPR to the beat of the Bee Gees' disco hit "Stayin' Alive," which has the ideal chest compression rhythm of 100 to 120 beats per minute.



# A Better Cast for Broken Bones

ast21, developed by engineering grads from the University of Illinois, is an elegant sleeve of silicone tubes that wind around a broken limb and are then injected with polyurethane, which hardens the tubes into a sturdy but open lattice. There's no sweating and itching as with a typical cast, and wearers can shower and swim. The inventors hope Cast21 will be available by the end of 2017. Until then, if you break your arm or wrist, you can ask your doctor for a waterproof cast liner, advises Jordan Metzl, a sports medicine physician at the Hospital for Special Surgery.

Percentage of people who said they would start CPR if they saw someone who needed it

# LET THERE BE LIGHT BOXES!

For some people, the dark days that persist into this month bring on a temporary depression called seasonal affective disorder. Light boxes are a common treatment. Rachel Carlton Abrams. physician and author of BodyWise: Discovering Your Body's Intelligence for Lifelong Health and Healing, advises her patients to use a light box first thing in the morning for at least 30 minutes. She recommends models that provide 10,000 lux of light intensity and also block UV rays. Here are three that meet those standards.



# Get the Red Out

For stressed skin, try this calming blend of organic calendula, chamomile, and comfrey, which helps soothe inflammation and stimulate cell arowth. The cream has a slight green tint to neutralize redness while it's working.

## **Organic Redness Rescue Cream**

(\$69 for 1.7 oz: shop.prevention.com)





#### WHAT IS IT?

#### DE-PRESCRIBING

A trend in which doctors and patients work together to reduce the number of medications a patient takes. The practice is particularly helpful for older patients, who are more likely to be taking multiple meds, increasing the risk of side effects.



## **INSTANTID**

You're in a store, and someone calls your name and gushes about how happy she is to see you. But you have no idea who she is or where you know her from. The best way to remember a person the next time you meet her is to create a visual story about her face, says four-time USA Memory Champion Nelson Dellis.

- **1** FOCUS on the person's face and gaze at it for a while.
- 2 PICK a striking feature, such as spiky hair, as an "anchor."
- 3 IDENTIFY memorable secondary features, such as large ears.
- 4 LINK the features. For instance, imagine people with big ears dancing on spikes. Associate that image with the person.

# Are You Hungry Yet?

OME CALL IT "food porn"—photos of delicious-looking dishes staring back at you from everywhere as you go about your day. Yale University researchers found that even people who said they weren't hungry had brain responses indicative of hunger when they saw images of high-calorie foods. The researchers believe these tempting pictures can overpower the body's natural "full" signal-meaning you should put down the food magazine or turn off the cooking show if you're looking to curb cravings or lose weight.



# Your Body on a Cell Phone

Smartphones help you wake up, navigate, connect with others, and have fun. Not so fun, though, are some things using your phone can do to you.

#### **TEXT NECK**

When you tuck your phone under your chin to talk or tilt your head down at a 60-degree angle to read that tiny screen, it puts 60 extra pounds of force on your neck, which stresses the spine and can eventually damage it.

#### **BUM THUMB**

Making repeated thumb movements while typing on a phone can lead to de Quervain syndrome, discomfort and swelling along tendons at the base of the thumbs.

#### DRY EYES

Staring at your phone screen for longer than 2 hours can cause eye irritations such as dryness and blurred vision.

#### RINGXIETY

Anxiety about staying connected can make you feel phantom vibrations from your phone when you don't actually have an alert. At the furthest extreme is nomophobia, or fear of being separated from your device.

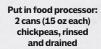
#### WANDER-WALKING

Texting while walking has caused people to tumble down stairs, walk straight into intersections, and even fall into public fountains.

# 15-Minute All-Organic Meal Under \$15

Chickpea Cakes Over Mixed Greens







\$1.98

4 Tbsp whole wheat flour



\$0.20

½ tsp each ground cumin, salt, and pepper



\$0.28

2 cloves garlic, chopped



\$0.29

2 eggs, slightly beaten. Pulse until combined. Form 16 patties and roll in additional flour.



\$0.68

Heat 2 Tbsp olive oil in skillet over medium-high and cook patties, in batches, until golden, 2 to 3 minutes per side.



\$0.39

Divide 2 cups mixed greens (such as chopped kale, spinach, and Swiss chard) into 4 bowls and top with 4 patties per bowl.



\$3.84

Total: \$7.66

**NUTRITION** (per serving) 280 cal, 14 g pro, 31 g carb, 10 g fiber, 1 g sugars, 12.5 g fat, 2 g sat fat, 789 mg sodium





# Lucky Iron Fish to Add Iron to Food

n estimated 10 million Americans are iron deficient, meaning they have low levels of the mineral in their blood (fatigue is the most common symptom). But many people have trouble taking iron supplements because they cause stomach upset. Enter the Lucky Iron Fish, which can be tossed into cooking liquid—water for boiling pasta, for example—to add iron to food. The fish was originally developed to fight iron deficiency anemia, a more severe lack of the mineral, in poor countries. "The Iron Fish may help slightly raise iron levels," says integrative health physician Tasneem Bhatia.

#### **BOTTOM LINE**

There's not enough research to say the Lucky Iron Fish can directly combat iron deficiency anemia, but if your blood levels of the mineral are low and you're supplement-averse. the concept's solid.

Annual loss in billions to the US economy due to sleep deprivation



# TWO FOODS TO BANISH **BFIIY FAT**

Want a flatter stomach? Add canola oil and almonds to your diet. In a monthlong, industryfunded study, participants who drank daily smoothies containing canola oil lost fat specifically from the belly. The researchers suggest swapping canola oil for other oils in sautéed foods, baked goods, and salad dressings. In another industry-funded study, people who snacked on 1½ oz of unsalted whole almonds each day lost more belly fat than those who ate a calorically identical muffin with butter. Again, it's a matter of swaps: The researchers recommend eating almonds in place of a high-carb snack to help whittle the waist.



"Stand tall, feet shoulder-width apart, shoulders back, arms by your sides, and take three slow, deep breaths. Close your eyes and think of a time when vou felt very confident. Imagine what color that confidence appears as in your body and make it brighter. Spread that shade throughout your body and feel it getting brighter until you're full of that rich. confident color, Now let self-belief and fortitude spread through your whole being. Next time you need confidence, go back and feel that color empowering you."

-Mary Heath,  $stress\ management$ consultant and yoga instructor, author of Get Your Life Back



# OPPOSITE PAGE, SMOOTHIE: VIKTORNÉ LUPANESZKU/STOCKSY. THIS PAGE, FROM LEFT: MITCH MANDEL. PHOTOSOUTH/GETTY IMAGES

# **Battle of the Bulge Busters**

Can't decide whether to take a brisk walk or do reps with hand weights? Both are beneficial, but the right choice for you depends on your fitness goals.



	TRAINI	TRAINING	
$\bigcirc$	If you want to build muscle	$\checkmark$	
$\checkmark$	If you want to improve your cardiovascular fitness	$\bigcirc$	
$\bigcirc$	If you want to lose fat	Ø	
$\bigcirc$	If you want to lower your blood pressure	Ø	
$\bigcirc$	lf you have lower-back pain	Ø	

and total cholesterol If you want to improve HDL ("good") cholesterol

If you want to build or maintain bone

If you want to reduce LDL ("bad")



# FROM LEFT: MATT RAINEY. MITCH MANDEL. ILLUSTRATION BY ARTHUR MOUNT

# Your Fit in 10 Plan

Lose weight, build strength, and get inspired



MAKEOVER OF THE MONTH NANCY SHENKER

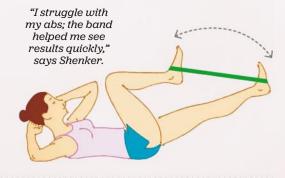
Age 60 Pounds lost 17 Inches lost 16.75

When Shenker turned 60, she decided it was time to get back in shape. "I plan on living another 60 years, and I want every single day to count," she says. Looking for a way to eat well and move more while balancing her marketing business and website for women entrepreneurs, the grandmother found Fit in 10. With the program's daily 10-minute toning routines and simple 10-minute meals, she watched the pounds fall away. "The fact that 10 minutes a day gets results is awe-inspiring," she says, adding, "I plan on breaking the outdated image of what it means to be a grandparent. Being unhealthy just isn't an option."

# Band Bicycle

his simple Fit in 10 move revs up the power of regular crunches, forcing your abs to work extra hard as you bend and extend your legs. All you need is a resistance band loop. For best results, do 3 sets 3 times a week.

TRY IT Lie on back with knees over hips, band around arches of feet. Place hands behind head and separate knees slightly. Extend left leg and bring right knee to left elbow. Switch sides. Continue for 30 seconds.





# 10 MINUTES TO SLIM & STRONG FOR LIFE!

For the new 8-week program that helped Shenker and other busy women get in shape with 10-minute meals and 10 minutes of daily exercise, go to *Fitin10SlimandStrong.com*. Has Fit in 10 transformed your life? Send your story to *readerstories@prevention.com*.

#### **MEAL OF THE MONTH**

# Blueberry-Hazelnut Yogurt Bark This refreshing treat satisfies ice-cream cravings for a fraction of the

calories—and takes less than 10 minutes to put together.

Serves 1 Prep time: 3 minutes Total time: 5 minutes + freezing time

1/2 c 2% Greek yogurt

2 Tbsp wild blueberries

1 Tbsp chopped hazelnuts

1 tsp honey

Line small baking dish with parchment. Combine yogurt, blueberries, hazelnuts (or a nut of your choice), and honey. Spread mixture in even layer (about 1/4" thick) in dish and freeze until hard. 3 hours. Let sit at room temperature for several minutes before breaking into bite-size pieces.

**NUTRITION** (per serving) 153 cal, 11 g pro, 14 g carb, 1 g fiber, 12 g sugars, 7 g fat, 2 g sat fat, 39 mg sodium





# **Problem Solved!**

# Muscle Cramps

BY RICHARD LALIBERTE

uscle cramps occur when skeletal muscles-those that move bones and that are normally under your controlstart contracting on their own. The pain, which can last from a few seconds to 15 minutes or even longer, can be intense, but most of the time, cramps don't indicate a serious medical problem. They often develop

when muscles are stressed from overdoing exercise or when you hold your body in a position that keeps muscles tightened for a long time. While cramps can strike any skeletal muscle, some common spots are in the legs: calves, hamstrings, and quadriceps. Up to 95% of adults report having cramps. Here's how to prevent and ease them.

Percentage of muscle cramps that occur at night

# PREVENTIVE MEASURES



# **Exercise**

Strong muscles are better able to withstand stress from exertion, and keeping muscles fit is especially important for older people, since age-related muscle loss accelerates with inactivity. "Muscles accustomed to exercise have less chance of fatigue, which is a main factor in cramping," says Elizabeth Matzkin, chief of women's sports medicine at Harvard Medical School. If you're starting a new exercise regimen, build up your strength gradually to minimize the chance of cramping.

Muscles need water to contract properly, and dehydration may increase the risk of cramps, especially in hot conditions. Nighttime cramps, the ones that wake you up and send you hopping out of bed, might be due to dehydration that occurs while you're sleeping. Generally, women need about 9 cups of fluids a day; men require about 13 cups, although the requirements are affected by activity level, eating habits (salt intake, fluids in food), and other factors.

# **Electrolytes**

Minerals like potassium, magnesium, calcium, and sodium regulate electrical signals that trigger muscle contractions. "Deficiency or losses through sweat may lead to muscles seizing up," says Joseph Herrera, chairman of the department of rehabilitation medicine at Mount Sinai Health System. Eat a variety of mineral-rich foods like dairy, fruit, leafy vegetables, and whole grains. If you exercise for more than an hour, hydrate with a sports drink that contains electrolytes.

# HOME REMEDIES



# Stretching

Soothe cramping muscles by gently stretching them, which lengthens muscle fibers and encourages them to relax. If you tend to develop leg cramps in bed, keep a towel within reach that you can use to wrap around your foot and pull the foot back toward you while you're lying down. Snug bedding can press feet down, making muscles vulnerable to spasms, so try loosening your covers. To stay limber, incorporate active stretching into your daily routine and stretch after working out.

# Heat

Warmth from a hot water bottle, warm towel, bath, or shower relaxes muscles and makes them more pliable. Use heat for 5 to 10 minutes,

then follow up with gentle stretches. Apply a menthol-based ointment or topical anti-inflammatory pain reliever like Bengay to soothe soreness that can follow severe cramps.

Bonus: "Massaging muscles as you put on ointment may help relieve cramps directly," Matzkin says.

# **NSAIDs**

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen won't release tight muscles, but they can ease soreness that lingers when muscles cramp for an extended period, says David Geier, a spokesperson for the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine. The drugs take about an hour to work, which is why they aren't useful while a cramp is occurring. Avoid drinking alcohol when taking NSAIDs; it's dehydrating and can make cramps more difficult to alleviate.

# MEDICAL TREATMENTS



# Statin management

If you use a statin to lower cholesterol, tell your doctor if you experience cramps or muscle soreness, both common side effects of these drugs. Your doctor may adjust how you take the drug or prescribe a statin that's less likely to cause cramping. There's evidence that taking 100 to 200 mg of coenzyme Q10 daily may prevent muscle pain from statins, since statins lower your body's levels of this chemical important for muscle function. Check with your doctor before taking it.

# Vitamin B complex

B vitamins help provide energy to muscles and nerves, so they're important for the normal function of both. Taking a B-complex supplement three times a day for 3 months relieved leg cramps in 86% of older people in one small study, while making remaining cramps shorter and less intense. B vitamins can interact with other medications, including some statins, so alert your physician if you take a supplement.

# **Prescription drugs**

There are no drugs specifically approved to treat muscle cramps, but there are some—including gabapentin, an anticonvulsant, and diltiazem, a calcium channel blocker—that are prescribed off-label when other options don't help. In preliminary research, each relieved spasms. But the drugs warrant more study: The antimalarial drug quinine was once prescribed off-label to treat muscle cramps until reports of serious side effects like bleeding prompted the FDA to warn against that use.

This injectable drug is effective for people with hard-to-treat psoriasis but it comes with an exorbitant price tag.



# **Before You Take It**

# Taltz for Psoriasis

BY SARAH KLEIN

he medical community heralded the early clinical trial results of ixekizumab (Taltz), a breakthrough treatment for psoriasis—an incurable but controllable disease that causes skin cells to build up in itchy, red patches called plagues, often on the scalp, knees, elbows, and lower back. In

12 weeks, the self-administered injection completely or almost completely cleared up skin plaques in about 80% of people with moderate to severe cases of the disease. The FDA approved the drug in March 2016. Then, a June follow-up study showed that the benefits continued in 75% of the improved patients for more than a year, a higher response rate than for any other approved psoriasis drug, says lead study author Kenneth Gordon, Medical College of Wisconsin dermatology chair.

#### How it works

Ixekizumab targets a different inflammation molecule than older versions of similar drugs do. Like secukinumab, a comparable med that wasn't quite as effective in early trials, ixekizumab binds to a molecule called interleukin-17 to stop the inflammation that creates psoriasis plagues. Patients administer an initial dose of two shots, then one shot every 2 weeks for 3 months, continuing with one shot every 4 weeks.

#### The concerns

All psoriasis drugs suppress the immune system and therefore increase the risk of infections. But since ixekizumab targets one specific immune system molecule, it has a lower infection risk than other psoriasis meds do.

For many, ixekizumab's main drawback may be its price: more than \$4,000 per shot if not covered by insurance. Even with insurance, copays or coinsurance may total as much as \$1,500 per month because some companies classify the drug as a specialty treatment.

# Before vou take it

There are no long-term studies of ixekizumab, and the drug's manufacturer funded all existing studies. "Psoriasis is a lifetime disease," Gordon says. "We want to make sure the drug keeps working." Test results after 5 or 10 years will help assess safety and long-term relief, says Lindsay Strowd, an assistant professor of dermatology at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. If your current regimen works, there's no reason to switch, experts say. But if other treatments haven't brought relief, drugs that operate on IL-17 may offer some benefit.

# WHAT ELSE WORKS?

#### **TOPICAL TREATMENTS**

OTC and Rx creams are typically the first steps in treatment and are helpful in mild cases. The most common Rx creams are topical steroids, which reduce swelling and redness but may cause stretch marks, easy bruising, and changes in skin pigmentation, OTC options rely on ingredients that moisturize the skin and relieve itching.

#### PRESCRIPTION MEDS

Pills like cyclosporine (Neoral) and apremilast (Otezla) either suppress

the entire immune system or target various inflammation enzymes to improve psoriasis. Many can increase the risk of kidney or liver damage, so patients taking these medications usually require regular medical monitoring.

#### **PHOTOTHERAPY**

Shining UV light on the skin can suppress inflammation and may help clear plagues. While phototherapy can be extremely effective, Strowd says, it requires two or three visits a week for at least 6 to 8 weeks and may lead to an increased risk of skin cancer.



# Dr Weil

# Do over-the-counter hearing aids work?

EARING LOSS due to any number of causes (such as exposure to loud noises, genetic predisposition, and some diseases) is fairly common, affecting about 15% of American adults. Hearing loss due to aging, called presbycusis, which develops over years, is even more common, affecting almost a third of people ages 65 to 74, nearly half of people ages 75 to 80, and almost 80% of those older than 80. In the same way that people often require reading glasses after age 40, many older people need a device to augment their hearing. While you can buy reading glasses for a few dollars at any drugstore, buying a hearing aid is not so straightforward.

In a 2015 report, the President's Council of Advisors

on Science and Technology described hearing aid prices as too high and the pace of innovation by manufacturers as "conspicuously slow." Hearing aids can cost thousands of dollars, and that expense is generally not covered by Medicare or health insurance. It's no wonder that people experiencing hearing loss are tempted to save money by purchasing one of the devices widely available over the counter. Some OTC devices come as Bluetooth headsets, while others fit into the ear canal like traditional hearing aids, without the

Andrew Weil, MD, is founder and director of the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine.

**3 FOODS HFARING**  custom fit. The OTC devices may cost as little as \$10—though the least expensive are usually the least effective.

Here is what you need to know before purchasing a hearing device. First, federal and state regulations require that hearing aids be provided only by an audiologist, a physician, or another licensed dispenser. Unlike true hearing aids, which are regulated by the FDA as medical devices, OTC devices are classified as "wearable electronic products" and can't be labeled as hearing aids. Instead, they are called "personal sound amplification products" (PSAPs), and manufacturers are barred from claiming that they help with hearing loss. Recent Johns Hopkins research found that PSAPs can work well for people with mild to moderate hearing loss but are not suitable in severe cases.

Before investing in a device, have your hearing evaluated by a professional to rule out other causes of hearing impairment unrelated to age, including blockage of the ear canal by earwax. While PSAPs may be useful for some people, proper hearing aids—prescribed, fitted, and adjusted by a physician or audiologist-are the most effective way to manage age-related hearing loss.



# DEFINING HEARING LOSS

Hearing levels are measured in decibels: the lower the number, the quieter the sound you can hear.

> $0-25\,\mathrm{dB}$ normal hearing

# 26-40 dB

difficulty understanding someone speaking softly, from far away, or over a noisy background

# 41-55 dB

difficulty hearing regular talking, even at a distance closer than 5 feet

# 56-90 dB

difficulty understanding any conversational speech: may be able to hear only loud talking and strong sounds



### **Sweet Potatoes**

They're rich in beta-carotene, which is linked to a lower risk of hearing loss.



# Spinach

Leafy greens, a great source of iron, may lessen risk of losing your hearing.



#### Almonds

Hearing loss from loud noises may be offset by the magnesium in this nut.



# or.Low]

# I keep hearing about herbal tinctures. What are they?

RINKING herbal teas or syrups is a good way to benefit from herbs' healing properties. One of my favorite herbal preparations is a tincture-a concentrated liquid made by soaking herbs in alcohol. Over several weeks, the alcohol is infused with the healing components of the herbs. When the herbs are strained out, you get a potent remedy with a shelf life of 10 years or more.

Almost any herb can be prepared as a tincture. Some tinctures, such as those made with chamomile or passionflower, both of which promote calm, are taken orally. Other tinctures, like arnica for sore muscles and insect stings, can be swabbed on topically.

Most store-bought tinctures cost at least \$10 per ounce online or in a health food store. My homemade tinctures are just as effective, and I save money by making them myself.

One of my favorite recipes is a simple chamomile tincture, which is wonderful for soothing an upset stomach, reducing gas, and promoting restful sleep and a good mood.

Once you make the tincture, take ½ to 1 tsp as needed, up to three times a day—either straight or mixed into a small amount of water, tea, or juice. I like to make this tincture using German chamomile (Matricaria recutita), which can be found in bulk at health food stores or from reputable online retailers like Mountain Rose Herbs (mountainroseherbs.com).

**Tieraona** Low Dog, MD, is a physician, educator, author, and expert in the fields of integrative medicine and women's health.



# **Just Say Thanks**

Annabelle Gurwitch explores why women can't take a compliment.

> **'VE BEEN** playing tennis for the past 7 years with a group of mothers I met at my son's middle school. Our kids have headed off to college, but we're still hitting the courts two mornings a week. What makes these sessions enjoyable is that we play purely for fun and so we can continue to squeeze into our mom jeans. None of us is under any illusion that she's going to become a late-in-life tennis sensation.

So the atmosphere is friendly. When one of us hits a smokin' shot over the net, another will say, "Nice!" or "Wow, you are killing it today!" Then the player who smashed it will invariably answer, "I got lucky," "The wind is in my favor," or "Mercury must not be in retrograde."

I never thought that this might be a problem until I read about a Japanese study showing that praise stimulates a part of the brain that makes learning easier, which in turn can improve confidence and emotional health. Each warm commendation lands with a measurable effect—in fact. it stimulates the same area of the brain that receiving a cash award does. So when we deflect praise, my friends and I might be negatively affecting our otherwise healthy activity. If so, why bother getting up so early? We might as well sleep in and turn our tennis rackets into jewelry racks.

To find out how widespread the allergy to compliments is, I decided to conduct a completely unscientific survey and soon discovered that the tendency to demur is nearly universal.

We have many clever styles of dodging approval. Karina, a successful, recently single film producer, uses what I'll call the "I'm rubber, you're glue, whatever you say bounces off me and sticks to you" deflection when she's on a date. If complimented on her appearance, she'll answer, "Well, you're not too bad yourself." "It keeps me from having to absorb it or seem too conceited," she says.



66 I challenged myself to graciously accept every compliment that came mv wav for a week.

A common tactic is to treat praise like the aftermath of an accident-you know, when the police show up and say, "Nothing to see here. Keep moving." Friends who do this admitted to averting their eyes and changing the subject when congratulated on a job well done. "You think the new website looks good? Well, don't be fooled. You probably haven't read the articles I just added," Bethann, who works at a tech start-up, shared as an example of the compliment repellent she uses.

Another friend, Susan, serves up a "family style restaurant" response when lauded for her work in corporate financial restructuring. "I wish I could take credit," she'll say, "but I'm just fortunate to be working with such a great team." That might be believable, except that Susan works alone.

Theories abound as to why so many women have trouble accepting, much less believing, a simple compliment. Maybe our extreme humility is a relic from an era when being demure was a prized quality in women. Maybe it's low self-esteem. Wherever it comes from, I decided to try to eradicate it. I challenged

myself to graciously accept every compliment that came my way over the next week.

It was more difficult than I expected. A friend I ran into at a fancy luncheon told me I looked great. I couldn't help but reply, "Sure, if you're comparing me with survivors of a zombie apocalypse."

A few moments later. another woman introduced herself and said she was a fan of my writing. My immediate reaction was to assume that she had me confused with someone else. But I pulled myself together and managed a tentative "thank you." It was a start.

Admittedly, there were two anxious days when no one complimented me on anything, and I had a minor breakdown over failing to earn praise from the supermarket cashier for my organized assemblage of groceries. The next day, however, while I was touching up my makeup at a red light, a guy pulled up next to me and gave me a smile and a thumbsup. I waved and mouthed, "Thanks!" It felt terrific.

I hit my stride the day after that when a woman ran toward me as I jogged down the street, "Nice pace!" she called out as she sprinted past.



Though 100% positive that her voice was laced with sarcasm, I was ready with my comeback: "Thanks so much!" That exchange gave me an extra jolt of energy that allowed me to finish the loop where I usually peter out and slink home.

At the end of the week, I was primed to enjoy any and all accolades on the tennis court. But I played worse than I ever had, whiffing on even the simplest of volleys. With no compliments coming my way, my plan was foiled—but I had a backup: I lavished praise on my teammates, even when their shots wildly missed the mark.

"You must've had a great cup of coffee

today," I said to Julie. "Good try!"

"It was four cups, but, uh, OK!" she shot back.

I kept going: "Great job, Karen. It was barely out."

"I think it landed two courts over," she replied. "But thanks!"

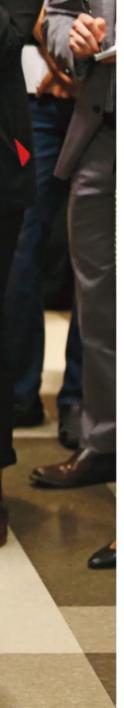
By the end of the hour, I'd either successfully shifted my friends' attitudes toward receiving compliments or worn them down. Either way, they'd begun responding with a simple "Thank you!" and there was an infectious esprit de corps among us.

Leaving the court that day, I felt like I'd gained back the half inch of height I seem to have lost

since turning 50. I've decided to keep working on not only accepting compliments, but also being more generous both on and off the court. I definitely feel my spine elongate when I'm able to forgo my standard self-deprecating eye roll in favor of a confident thank-you when someone says something nice about me. And by handing out compliments to my friends, I'm helping them break the same habit. That feels pretty rich indeed.

Annabelle Gurwitch is the author of the new book of comedic essays Wherever You Go, There They Are: Stories About My Family You Might Relate To.





# **America's** Opioid Crisis (Might Be **Different Than** You Think)

Surgeon General Vivek Murthy gives surprising-and encouraging-answers to questions about drug and alcohol abuse.

#### AS TOLD TO SARAH KLEIN

he chances are very good that you know someone who's battling cancer. The chances are even better that, whether you're aware of it or not, you know someone who's struggling with a substance use disorder. Twenty-one million Americans are now living with one—more than the number of people living with cancer in this country. But while most cancer patients are receiving medical care for their illness, only 10% of people dealing with substance misuse or addiction are getting treatment for it. These disorders strike the rich and the poor, both urban and rural dwellers, and every

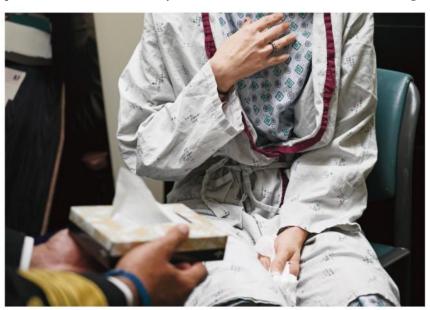
The Surgeon General meets a patient during a nationwide tour leading up to the publication of his report Facing Addiction in America.

race and ethnicity. Those who have one may be struggling with opioid prescription drugs, alcohol, so-called recreational drugs, or any other substance with addictive properties. Recently, the office of US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy issued, for the first time ever, a report about substance use and misuse—Facing Addiction in America. The report highlights a new way of thinking about addiction: that it's a disease of the brain, not a moral failing, and that social support and treatment, not judgment, are most important for recovery. Prevention asked Surgeon General Murthy to elaborate on this dramatic shift in perspective and the new approach to addiction and recovery.

PREVENTION: Why did you decide to issue a report about addiction now?

**VIVEK MURTHY:** When I started as Surgeon General in 2014, I visited small towns and big cities across the country so I could better understand what people were concerned about. Everywhere I went, substance use disorders and addiction came up. People had experienced addiction themselves or they'd seen it happen with a family member or a friend, and I quickly realized this was a crisis touching all of America.

It reflected something I had seen in my own clinical practice, which is that substance use disorders were affecting



Addiction should be treated with skill, urgency, and compassion, Murthy says.

far more people than any of us thought. When I left my job as an internal medicine doctor in Boston to serve as Surgeon General in DC, the nurses at my hospital said to me, "If there's one thing you can do as Surgeon General, please do something about the drug crisis in America, because it's tearing our communities apart." And they

were right. Substance use disorders have now become pervasive in a way that we didn't see 30 or 40 years ago.

**PVN:** How do you define substance misuse and addiction?

VM: Substance misuse is the use of any substance in a manner, situation, amount, or frequency that can cause harm to users or those around them. Prolonged, repeated misuse of a substance can lead

to a substance use disorder, which is a medical illness that impairs the person's health and function. Substance use disorders range from mild to severe. Severe and chronic substance use disorders are commonly referred to as addictions.

**PVN:** Why did you decide to use the phrases substance misuse and substance use disorder rather than substance abuse in your report?

VM: There's an unfortunate set of negative perceptions associated with addiction. For too long, people have viewed it as a disease of choice and not a disease of the brain, but there's a biological basis for addiction. Substance use disorders involve changes to the circuits of the brain that affect decision making, impulse

> control, and the stress and reward systems. By helping people understand that addiction is a disease, rather than a character flaw, we are able to place substance use disorders firmly in the category of medical and public health challenges that require a medical and public health solution.

It was important to me to call out misuse because there are millions of people in America who are misusing substances and causing

harm to themselves and others, even if they don't have a full-blown substance use disorder. We're finding that many of the people who are doing this don't necessarily see themselves as being at risk of experiencing harm or contributing harm to others. But in 2015. 66 million people reported that they had engaged in binge drinking, and about 28 million people indicated that they had driven under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

"Recognizing that addiction is a chronic disease can create an environment in which people can come out from the shadows and get help."

**PVN:** If addiction is understood as a chronic medical disease, does that change our thinking about treatment?

VM: I think it makes a big difference. It's a misconception that a substance use disorder is a weakness rather than a chronic illness, and that stigma makes it hard for people to step forward and ask for help. People are worried that if they disclose their struggles with addiction, they will lose their jobs, be ostracized by their friends, and perhaps

even be looked at differently by their doctors. That contributes to the treatment gap that we see, in which only 1 in 10 people with a substance use disorder is receiving treatment. My hope is that if we help society recognize that this is a chronic disease, we can create an environment in which people can come out from the shadows and get help.

**PVN:** Some of the traditional ways of treating addiction, including 12-step programs, have been criticized. What's

> your view of current treatments?

### HOW TO HELP

"When it comes to addressing addiction. all of us have an important role we can play." Surgeon General Vivek Murthy says. He recommends taking these three steps to change your perspective.

#### 1. Get educated about addiction.

Understand that addiction is a chronic disease and not a moral failing or character flaw. (For more information on the neurobiology of addiction, visit addiction.surgeongeneral.gov.)

#### 2. Choose your words wisely.

The language we use—for example, words like junkie—may intentionally or unintentionally cast judgment on people who are living with substance use disorders. Be mindful of how you talk about addiction in any situation.

#### 3. Be a safe harbor.

The same people who would feel comfortable at work talking about a family member's struggle with heart disease might not feel comfortable sharing in the same way if a family member is living with a substance use disorder. So show compassion, and make your home and workplace safe spaces for people to talk about their challenges.

VM: I think it's important to keep in mind that treatment is not a 2-week process. Treatment is a long-term undertaking, and, as with the treatment of conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes, you often need to use a combination of medications and lifestyle changes. We have to be careful about saying that the only approach to treatment and recovery is abstinence, because science has shown that's actually not the case. Abstinence is one path that works well for some. but there are other effective, evidence-based medical treatments available for substance



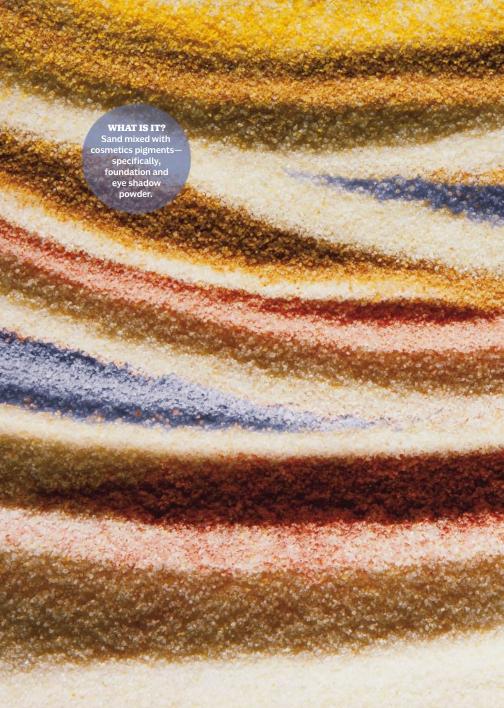
Murthy visits with patients and health care providers at Man Alive, a treatment center in Baltimore for people with opioid dependence.

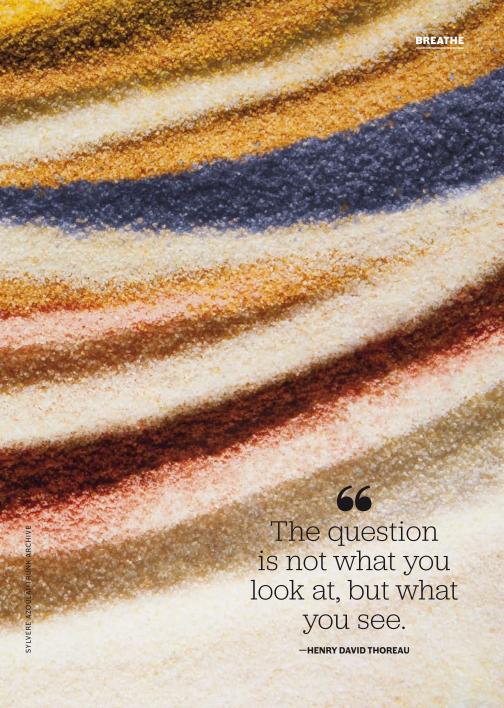
use disorders. Many people, including those with substance use disorders. don't know that.

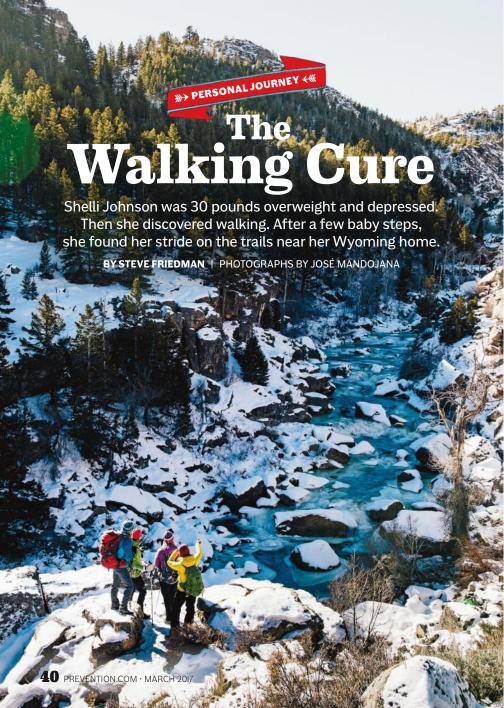
**PVN:** Are there any new treatments or programs on the horizon that would help improve recovery rates for people living with addiction?

**VM:** There are several treatments available, some of which are newer than others. The cold turkey approach works for some people, but many others are more successful with medication-assisted treatment (MAT), which is an evidence-based,

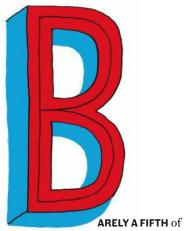
scientifically proven strategy that reduces substance use, relapse, and overdose, MAT is often used for opioids but can also be used to treat alcohol use disorders. The key to MAT is combining medication with counseling and social support. Everyone I've met who has made it through that dark tunnel of addiction and is living in recovery attributes much of their success to a source of support they had in their lives, whether it was a parent, a spouse, or a good friend who stuck by them and believed in them. One aspect of 12-step programs that can be helpful is the community component. A network is an essential part of moving from addiction into recovery-a tough journey that no one should take alone.











the way into what Shelli Johnson had hoped would be a triumphant march, she lifted her face to the red canvon walls and screamed with rage.

She had just walked for 21/2 hours. from the South Rim of the Grand Canyon to this spot along the Colorado River. Fewer than 1% of visitors to the national park hike from the top of the canyon to the river, and many of them ride on mules one way, sometimes both ways. Even fewer hike along the river, then up to the other side of the canyon, and most of them have arranged for a vehicle to pick them up there. The group of women and men who hike the 46 miles from rim to rim to rim is tiny, exclusive, and as admired in the hiking community as 5-minute-mile marathoners are among runners.

Park authorities recommend that hikers give themselves at least 2 and preferably 3 days to complete the full trail and suggest 8 months of training

beforehand. Johnson had received a call 8 days earlier from a colleague, Jon Dorn, inviting her to meet him in Arizona. They would do the trek in one shot-starting in the afternoon and hiking through the night, when cooler temperatures would make it easier.

She knew the mythic status of the Grand Canvon and was well aware of the hardships and bragging rights. The outdoors had been an integral part of her life since she was a child. She had started hiking in her early 20s, before marriage, motherhood, and a successful business took up most of her time and weighed her down with 30 extra pounds.

After almost 2 decades away from the mountains, she'd spent the past year hiking the trails near her Wyoming home. She was stronger now, leaner, and had expected to end the Grand Canyon hike feeling proud of her accomplishment. At the moment, though, all she felt was pain.

Her feet had started hurting after 2 miles. After 3, they were burning, a sure sign of the "hot spots" that almost always lead to blisters. A few miles after that, she peeled off her boots and socks, afraid of what she might see.

She had blisters on her toes, between her toes, on her heels, and on the balls of her feet. Dorn, an experienced hiker and the former editor of a backpacking magazine, told her he'd never seen blisters that bad. If she wanted to turn back, now was the time.

It was May 20, 2010, and the two had walked 9 miles. They had 37 to go.

She asked for a moment alone,



hobbled 30 yards down the river, and looked from the canyon floor up to the sky.

"Really?" she yelled. "This is what it's going to be?"

She calculated. When she returned to Dorn, she asked whether she would injure herself if she continued the hike. He told her she wouldn't cause any permanent damage but that she would suffer.

She told Dorn to go ahead, that she would catch up with him, and resumed her hike. Every step felt like she was walking on needles.

The sky began to fade. She tried to pay attention to the ghostly quiet, the desert-scented breezes, the aching beauty of day's end-anything but the pain of her feet.



Johnson draws on her personal experience to guide other women. She and her friends started the adventure shown here in the dark, with temperatures in the low teens.

Johnson believed that suffering could teach us things. She just wished she knew what she was supposed to be learning at that moment.







TWO YEARS EARLIER, while staring at her laptop and frantically trying to finish up last-minute work as she did so many nights in the Lander,

WY, home she shared with her husband, Jerry, and three young boys, Johnson vowed to change her life.

She wanted to stop grabbing for the cell phone on the nightstand at 5:30 in the morning, then punching out e-mails while her husband and sons slept. She wanted to stop scarfing down whatever was available-usually junk-at the





Leann Sebade, Kathy Browning, Celeste LeBlanc, and Johnson (left to right) spent a winter day exploring the Middle Fork Trail near Lander, WY.

office for lunch. She needed to stop hunching over the computer screen at home in her living room after work, wondering if she was failing as a mother while her boys watched cartoons.

She typed another e-mail and promised herself she'd put a stop to the dinners that felt more like survival than family meals. the "vacations" she spent listening to her husband and sons laugh in the hotel pool while she hid under a beach towel and tapped out business messages on her

phone. She didn't like the way she looked in a swimsuit anyway. She was 5'4" and in the past 2 years had seen her weight climb from 134 to 164 pounds. She knew she needed to eat better, exercise more. She needed to take care of herself.

It was the summer of 2008. Johnson was a successful 40-year-old entrepreneur, and she wasn't sure what had gone wrong. She and Jerry had moved to Lander in 1995, a year after they started the Yellowstone Journal Corporation to publish a newspaper that covered all the activities in and news about the park. They had purchased the domain name YellowstonePark.com for \$7 in what had proved to be a brilliant business move.



The couple added a magazine, then interactive maps. They produced videos of the park, created podcasts, sent out direct mail and e-mail trip planners. They had the information on YellowstonePark.com translated into four languages.

Johnson was working day and night, and when she wasn't working, she was thinking about work. She had grown up in Lander, spent summers picnicking and hiking in the mountains. Although she still managed to enjoy the occasional family adventure, she no longer had the time to focus on personal fitness in the outdoors she loved. There didn't seem to be time for anything.

No matter how hard she focused, Johnson grew more unhappy. Eventually, she started seeing a life coach who helped her realize that as much as Johnson loved the company, she didn't love what it was doing to her life.

So in 2008, she and Jerry sold the business for a sum that paid off their debts and a little more—enough to give her time to reinvent herself. She agreed to stay on as a consultant, dropping her hours from 70 a week to 20.

Despite their success, her happiness was short-lived. She couldn't shake a vague sadness, and it frustrated her. How could she feel anything but delight about her life, with her beautiful family, secure home, and interesting work? She was ashamed of her despair. Every

night, she tried to figure out an answer. "I decided every single day for 2 years that I was going to do something, and I didn't," she says. And then, one morning in March 2009, Johnson decided she'd had enough. She drove to a local gym, walked inside, and signed up for twiceweekly sessions with a personal trainer.



When my leg muscles were pumping and I was breathing hard and surrounded by scenery, that was pure aliveness for me."



SHE LIFTED WEIGHTS. She swung kettlebells. She did burpees.

Working out made her feel better. And that led to changing the way she ate. For breakfast, she had two eggs with sautéed spinach. Lunch was a salad with chicken. Dinner was grilled meat, salad, and a green vegetable. But she still felt something was missing.

Lander is nestled on the eastern slopes of Wyoming's Wind River (continued on p. 48)



Mount Hood National
Forest, Oregon
2.1 miles round-trip
After walking a zigzag route

through the forest to the lake, you'll see the grandeur of 11,250-foot Mount Hood reflected in its calm water.

# Stratobowl Rim Trail

#### Black Hills National Forest, South Dakota

1.7 miles round-trip
You'll wind up at a lookout
with views of the valley below,
a site often used as a launch
spot for hot-air balloons.

# Mist Trail Yosemite National Park,

California | 1.6 miles round-trip
The park's most popular trail
leads you to the base of
Vernal Fall. Or continue up the
granite steps to an overlook
where walkers often see
rainbows in the mist.

# Hanakapi'ai Trail Na Pali Coast State Park,

Hawaii | 4 miles round-trip This walk takes you to a breathtaking view of Hanakapi'ai Beach. Ready for more? Hike another 2 miles to the waterfall.



MONTANA

SOUTH

DAKOTA

OREGON)



# **Bright Angel Trail**Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona

3 miles round-trip
This portion of the park's premier trail takes you directly into the canyon. The rest house 1.5 miles in is a perfect turnaround spot.

# Window Trail Big Bend National Park, Texas

5.6 miles round-trip
When you get to the rock
formation known as the
Window, you'll be treated
to stunning views of the
Chihuahuan Desert beyond.

# Hunt Trail Baxter State Park, Maine

10.4 miles round-trip
The summit of Mount
Katahdin awaits at the
end of this section of the
Appalachian Trail. Or enjoy
the first 1.5 miles of wooded
paths and then head back.

#### Monroe Trail Camel's Hump State Park, Vermont

6.8 miles round-trip You'll climb up to the rocky summit of Camel's Hump. Or, for a friendlier hike, try the 1-mile Camel's Hump View Trail.

# Empire Bluff Trail Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Michigan | 1.5 miles round-trip A tree-lined path takes you to a boardwalk that offers a look at Lake Michigan and the surrounding sand dunes.

-Kasey Benjamin

#### **PERSONAL JOURNEY**

(continued from p. 45)

Range. The town's 7,000 residents need only lift their heads to see foothills, canyons, and, from some spots, snowdusted peaks. Now that Johnson wasn't sitting on the couch wondering how she was going to change, she had more time to look up. And when she did, she felt a pull toward the trails she hadn't walked in years.

Johnson decided to return to the mountains. She started small, with 2 miles up the middle fork of the Popo Agie trail, to a waterfall, then turned back.



She knew the value of difficulty. She knew now that healthy living could make tough times easier, make good times great.

"I wanted to feel more alive," she says. "When my leg muscles were pumping and I was breathing hard and surrounded by scenery, that was pure aliveness for me."

Over the next few weeks, she hiked the trail again and again.

Tethered to her laptop, she had been miserable. Outside, moving through the hushed landscape, she felt joy. "I felt like I was coming out of a long hibernation," she recalls. "Like I was waking up to my life."

Soon, Johnson fell into a new rhythm. She kept up with her gym workouts and hiked almost every day. Fridays were set aside for long solo hikes, 15 miles or more.

By late summer, she was hiking up to 45 miles every week and was down to 138 pounds. She felt so much better about herself, and that carried over into the rest of her life. She got on the floor after dinner and roughhoused with the boys. Then the family played board games until bedtime. When Johnson turned in, she left her phone in the living room. She woke every morning feeling optimistic and inspired.

On one of her hikes, she decided she would start a business aimed at helping women who felt stuck. Part of the business would involve life coaching. The other part would include a guided hike into the wilderness. And she would call the enterprise Epic Life.

She had learned the value of difficulty, of struggle, even of pain. She had figured things out and knew that hiking had helped bring her to that place. She knew now that healthy living could make tough times easier, make good times great. If she remembered to keep moving, to get outside, things would be OK.



THINGS WERE NOT OK. Johnson was ascending toward the North Rim, step by burning step.

It took 6 hours to reach it. There, as she and Dorn rested, bats fluttered past her head, and a scorpion scuttled near





"I think an epic life is a hard-earned celebration," says Johnson. "It's not amazing all the time, but it's full of unforgettable moments." The moments that make her feel most alive are times like these, when the morning fog lifts as birds take flight (above) or when she pinpoints the best hiking path with a friend (below).





her feet. She guzzled water, ate peanut butter pretzels and beef jerky. After less than 30 minutes, Dorn took off and Johnson followed. They still had 24 miles to go. It was midnight, and they weren't even halfway done.

Descending into the black, she had never felt so tiny or alone, even when she could spy Dorn's headlamp bobbing in the distance.

A mantra became her focus, her way of dealing with the searing pain in her feet: I have a choice, she said to herself. What is this story going to be? What am I going to make of it? Will this be the worst experience of my life, or will it be



'I've worked with so many women, and we all struggle with the same things," says Johnson.

"I have learned that I'm not alone. We're not alone."

something else? I get to choose.

She reached Phantom Ranch, 10 miles from the finish line, as the sky was lightening. Dorn was there, and when he saw her, he was worried. When she took off her boots and socks and saw her feet, he was more worried. He tried to persuade her to ride on a mule ("No one would blame vou"), but Johnson refused, insisting that he go ahead and she would meet him at the top.

She made it. And when she met up with Dorn back at the South Rim, she called

her husband and sons. The moment she heard their voices, she broke into tears. "I cried from the pain but also from the relief and gratitude that I had made it to the end."

She knew there had been a lesson in what she had just put herself through. She just wasn't sure what it was.



**SOMETIMES JOHNSON** still thinks of how small she felt in the canyon, how cut off, how alone. She thinks of how much her feet hurt. And then she thinks of what she learned on her harrowing hike through the night.

She didn't understand it the day after, when a doctor at an urgent care center dressed the wounds on her feet and wrote her a prescription for codeine. She didn't understand it 3 weeks later, when her blisters had finally healed and she had returned to hiking in the mountains near her home.

It was months before she understood the lesson of her odyssev. And what she understood was this: Pain visits us all. It's how you respond to it that matters. "I realized that if I want to have a great life, I have to be in charge," says Johnson. "No one's going to do it for me. What am I going to make of it, especially when it gets really hard?"

The 2 years on the couch and the following year hiking her hometown trails had taught Johnson that she didn't love running a big business; bearing down and working harder didn't always lead to happiness. Having more leisure time wasn't always the answer, either. Moving more and getting outside helped. But none of that guaranteed freedom from pain.

Today, Johnson hikes 3 or 4 days a week, sometimes with her husband and children and often with her friends. But every Friday, no matter the conditions, she still heads out alone. In the spring and summer, she'll hike 10 to 30 miles. and when snow covers the trail, she'll cross-country ski up to 15 miles. It gives her time to think. To breathe. To move. To feel alive.

In 2013, Johnson launched her first Epic Women program. Every year, she leads 6 to 9 women on a 4- to 6-day trip in the Wind River Range. And when one of her clients talks about needing to make a change, Johnson tells her what she tells herself when life gets hard—the truth she learned in the Grand Canvon: "This is your life. You have only one. It is yours to live. If you want to change it, you can. You have a choice. What are you going to make of it?"

#### TELL US YOUR STORY

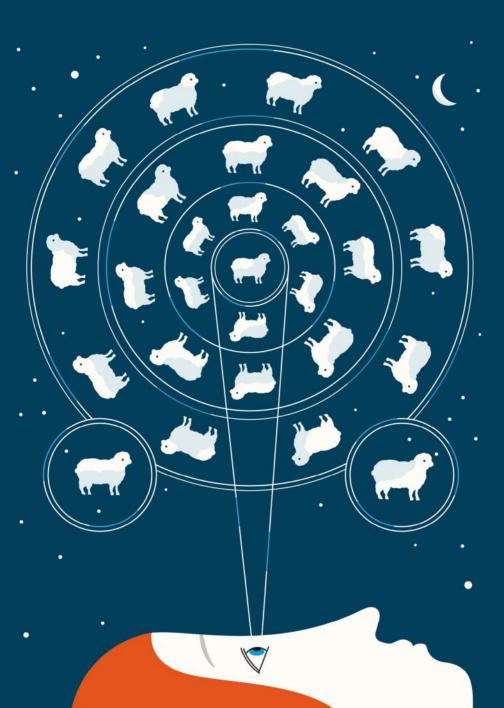
We'd love to read about your personal journey. Send it to readerstories @prevention.com and we could include it in an upcoming issue.

#### **Walking** Essentials

Whether vou're looping a park or trekking into the woods, these products belong in your bag. Find them at shop .prevention.com. All Good Coconut Sunscreen Stick SPF 30 (\$8) This chemicalfree sun stick goes on clear and offers broad UVA/ **UVB** protection with zinc.

Captain Blankenship Sail **Away Bug Spray** (\$20) Essential oils (like lavender and grapefruit) naturally repel mosquitoes, flies, and ticks.

**Gravl Ultra**light Purifier **Bottle** (\$60) With this lightweight water bottle, vou can say "so long" to nearly 100% of pathogens and impurities.



# Get a **Finally**

If you're among the one-third of adults who average less than 7 hours of sleep a night (the minimum recommended by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine), you might have a surprising underlying physical or psychological problem that's getting in the way. Here's a wake-up call on 10 stealth slumber-stealers

> BY ALICE OGLETHORPE ILLUSTRATIONS BY HARRY CAMPBELL

#### 1. SLEEP APNEA

Many people think this condition, which causes a person to stop breathing repeatedly during the night—sometimes hundreds of times, for a few seconds to a full minute—and then briefly wake up, affects only overweight men. But as women age, and especially as they go through menopause, they become just as likely as men to have sleep apnea—even if they're at a healthy weight, says Rafael Pelayo, a sleep specialist at the Stanford Sleep Medicine Center.

In fact, research shows that 17% of women likely have sleep apnea but that 85% of cases go undiagnosed. One reason is that women have different symptoms than men do. Snoring, a major tip-off that men have the disorder, is less common in women. They're more likely to develop symptoms related to being sleep deprived, such as difficulty thinking of the right word, clumsiness, fatigue, depression, or anxiety, says Katherine Sharkey, assistant dean for women in medicine and science at Brown University Alpert Medical School.

**SLEEP SOLUTION** If you notice these symptoms, tell your primary care physician-the medical community is becoming more aware that apnea isn't just a man's problem. If your concerns are dismissed, see a certified sleep specialist (the American Board of Medical Specialties has a list at certification matters .org). To determine whether you have the disorder, you'll likely undergo a sleep test-either in a lab or at home-during which you'll be monitored for breathing and oxygen levels throughout the night.

The most common treatment for apnea is a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machine, which helps maintain airflow while you sleep.

#### 2. MILD DEPRESSION

Just as people with major depression can have trouble falling or staying asleep, so too can the 17% of women who have a low-grade form of the illness. But because their symptoms—which include negative thoughts, excessive worry, lack of energy, and body aches—aren't as severe, women with mild depression are less likely to be diagnosed with sleep issues.

"There's a complex relationship between sleep and mild depression, and it can be difficult to determine which came first," says Aarti Gupta, founder and clinical director of TherapyNest, a private psychology practice in Palo Alto, CA. It's a vicious circle, she says: Depression symptoms set up poor sleep habits that can cause you to stay up or wake up in the middle of the night. "And without a good night's rest, it's difficult to function at your highest capacity the following day—which manifests as feeling tired, sad, and mildly depressed and sets up the cycle for lack of sleep for the next day."

**SLEEP SOLUTION** Because the symptoms of mild depression can be similar



to those many women experience during menopause, it's important to discuss your mental health history with your primary care doctor or a psychologist to determine whether your depressive symptoms existed prior to menopause or if the hormonal changes triggered or exacerbated them. Your physician will design a treatment plan that includes talk therapy, lifestyle changes, medication, or all three.

#### 3. CHANGING INTERNAL CLOCK

Everyone has a biological clock that

determines when they get tired at night and when their body wakes up in the morning. But starting around age 40. your clock begins to shift. Researchers aren't sure exactly why this happens, but the result is that your body will naturally wake up increasingly earlier, decreasing the amount of sleep you're getting, explains Hans Van Dongen, director of the Sleep and Performance Research Center at Washington State University. By the time you hit your 60s, you could be waking up 2 hours earlier than you did in your 30s.

**SLEEP SOLUTION** Move up your bedtime to accommodate your body's new sleep schedule. If you're worried that you'll lie awake because you're going to bed earlier than you're used to, Van Dongen offers reassurance. "You're probably naturally getting tired earlier, but it's easy to ignore or not notice the sleepiness if you're used to staying up late," he says. "Most older people find that when they start getting into bed earlier, they fall asleep easily."

#### 4. THYROID CONDITION

An overactive or underactive thyroid gland could be setting off a domino effect of hormone imbalances that make it hard to fall asleep or stay asleep. "When a thyroid is overactive, your heart races, your adrenaline surges, and vou can have insomnia and anxiety." says Amy Myers, author of *The Thyroid* Connection. When the gland is underactive, a condition that becomes more common after age 50, you're up to 35% likelier to have sleep apnea.

Thyroid problems hit women especially hard—they're up to eight times more likely than men to have thyroid problems, and up to 60% don't realize their insomnia is thyroid-related. It can be tough to pinpoint a thyroid disorder as the underlying cause of sleep problems, says Myers. That's because the other symptoms that accompany such disorders-depression, weight loss or gain, anxiety, and gastrointestinal issuescan seem unrelated to sleep.

**SLEEP SOLUTION** Your doctor can confirm or rule out a thyroid disorder by ordering a series of blood tests: TSH (thyroid-stimulating hormone), free T4, free T3, reverse T3, and thyroid antibodies. In the past, physicians tested only for TSH, but getting all five numbers provides a more accurate assessment of how your thyroid is functioning, explains Myers. Prescription medications can help get vour hormone levels back to where they should be, but lifestyle changes like improving your dietfor instance, eating more foods high in iodine, selenium, and zinc, which your thyroid needs to work properly—can make enough of an impact that drugs may not be necessary.

#### 5. ACID REFLUX

This condition, in which acid backs up from your stomach into your esophagus, can affect your sleep whether or not it results in heartburn. "With heartburn. the discomfort wakes you up. But even if you don't feel a burning sensation, the acid in your esophagus triggers a muscular reflex to clear it, which can disrupt

sleep," says David Johnson, a professor of medicine and chief of gastroenterology at Eastern Virginia Medical School, This helps explain why people with chronic acid reflux are more than twice as likely to have sleep problems.

**SLEEP SOLUTION** Lifestyle changes like eating smaller meals, not eating late at night, and losing weight can go a long way toward preventing acid reflux, and occasional bouts can be handled with antacids and other OTC drugs. If it becomes a regular occurrence, consult your doctor. "There could be other factors causing reflux—for example, cardiac disease can sometimes lead to heartburn-like symptoms—and a doctor can better diagnose the condition and direct the treatment," says Johnson.

#### 6. BEING A CAREGIVER

Everyone has some stress in their life, but taking care of a relative or friend has its own set of stressors that can disrupt sleep. Recent research shows that 76% of caregivers report poor sleep quality-and female caregivers, who outnumber their male counterparts two to one, are more likely to be among them. One reason: Female caregivers may spend as much as 50% more time providing care than male caregivers do, and researchers think there may be a threshold of time beyond which the likelihood of health consequences—including poor sleep—escalates. And regardless of gender, "being a caregiver is tough on your mental health," says Sharkey. "If your loved one is ill or has dementia, vou may become sad and anxious, which affects sleep."





**SLEEP SOLUTION** "You need peace of mind to sleep restfully," says Sharkey. So taking steps to reduce your nighttime anxiety is key. If you're worried about a loved one falling down on the way to the bathroom, get a bedside commode or install low-level lighting to brighten the path. Hiring a nighttime attendant or asking a friend or family member to take the late shift a few times a week can also help.

Taking chamomile supplements may soothe stress as well. In one study, patients with generalized anxiety disorder who took supplements with 220 mg of German chamomile for 8 weeks saw a significant decrease in anxiety.

#### % EXCESS BELLY FAT

When you carry extra weight in your midsection, your body has to work

harder to breathe when you lie down, which can cause sleep problems. Belly fat can also trigger higher levels of inflammation in your body that disrupt the neurological pathways that control sleep.

**SLEEP SOLUTION** Researchers at Johns Hopkins University found that the more belly fat you lose, the bigger the improvement you'll see in your sleep. In addition to cutting calories and stepping up exercise (which will help you lose weight all over your body), try incorporating more monounsaturated fatty acids from foods like olive oil, nuts, and avocados into your diet. "Increasing intake of these fats in a sensible way can be a powerful defense against weight gain, diabetes, heart disease, and belly fat," says David Katz, founding director of Yale University's Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center and a Prevention advisory board member.

#### 8. VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY

More than 40% of US adults have a vitamin D deficiency, a problem that's linked to cardiovascular disease, cancer, and weaker bones, as well as poor sleep. Research from Harvard School of Public Health found that 12% of people with low levels of D slept for less than 5 hours a night, and 57% were awake for 90 or more minutes in the middle of the night. The findings aren't surprising considering that vitamin D seems to have a direct effect on parts of your brain that play a role in sleep, says clinical psychologist Michael Breus.

**SLEEP SOLUTION** Your body produces vitamin D when your skin is directly exposed to the sun, but you can't always get your daily value of 600 IU that way-especially in the winter or if your skin is darkly pigmented. If you're deficient, which your doctor can determine with a blood test, you can boost your levels by eating foods like fatty fish, eggs, and vitamin D-fortified milk or orange juice. But since most women get only 144 to 276 IU a day through diet, a supplement may be necessary. Breus advises his patients to take 1,000 IU of D a day, as well as 500 mg of magnesium at night to boost absorption of the vitamin.

#### 9. BREATHING PROBLEMS

When your nose gets temporarily stuffed up—whether from seasonal allergies or a cold-you're likely to toss and turn at night because you're struggling to breathe. But other factors can narrow your airway permanently, such as a deviated septum, nasal polyps, large tonsils, or an overly large tongue. And these conditions can increase sleep disturbances: When researchers at the Sleep and Human Health Institute in Albuquerque, NM, studied 20 people with chronic insomnia, they found that 90% of the participants' middle-of-the-night wakings were linked to breathing issues.

**SLEEP SOLUTION** It won't treat the underlying issue, but lying on your side may help you sleep better-breathing problems tend to worsen when you sleep on your back, says Steven Y. Park, an assistant professor of otorhinolarvngology at Albert Einstein College of

Medicine. If this doesn't help, make an appointment to see an ear, nose, and throat specialist. The typical course of action is a physical exam to see if there's a blockage in your nose or throat, says Park. The fix may be something simple like a nasal breathing strip or a device to help you breathe (such as a CPAP machine), though in some cases surgery is recommended.

#### 10. A LESS-THAN-POSITIVE ATTITUDE

"The more favorably you look upon sleep—believing it makes you happy and that you feel refreshed after a full night of rest-the longer you'll actually sleep every night," says Hannah Peach, a lecturer in the psychology department at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte. When she recently asked people questions to rate how favorably they viewed sleep (with 1 meaning strongly disagree and 5 meaning strongly agree), she found that for every point higher their scores averaged, the time they spent in slumber increased by nearly 40 minutes.

**SLEEP SOLUTION** If you have trouble convincing yourself that sleep is something your body needs, which can help ensure that you get enough, try keeping a sleep log. Include how much sleep you got and how you felt throughout the day: how happy you were, how easy it was to concentrate, how hard the afternoon slump hit you. "Sleep isn't a luxury," says Peach. "And seeing the truth in black and white can help you understand the impact sleep has on your mood and energy."



2017

**WHEN CHOOSING** convenience foods, most people want to know they're healthy and delicious. So we scrutinized the labels of hundreds of products available in grocery stores and online, then invited 12 guest tasters-overseen by food and nutrition editor *Stephanie Eckelkamp*—to sample them. The goal: to find the 50 cleanest packaged foods on the market today.

Turn the page for our winners!

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JASON VARNEY

\* \* \*

Tart Cherry Rooibos





#### **Our Criteria**

The winning products:

- \* Contain no more than 10 g of added sugars
- \* Are made without excess sodium
- Don't contain genetically modified or artificial ingredients
  - \* Are new to the market within the past 18 months
  - \* Use toxin-free or eco-friendly packaging

O - Organic / V - Vegan / D - Dairy-Free G - Gluten-Free / P - High-Protein

#### \* Breakfast <sup>,</sup>



#### **Birch Benders Protein Pancake** & Waffle Mix

This mix packs 16 g of protein in a serving! (\$6)



#### **Icelandic Provisions Skyr.** Vanilla

A less-tangy version of Greek-style vogurt. this is one of the lowest-sugar flavored dairy products we've ever tried. (\$2) G.P



#### **Know Better Bread Buns**

Made from egg whites, almonds, and apple puree, this grain-free take on bread toasts nicely and makes the perfect base for everything from banana slices to burgers. (\$10 for 4) **D**, **G**, **P** 



#### Nomva Kale Pack This grab-and-go pouch

has it all-fruits, veggies, and probiotics. (\$4) O, V, D, G



#### **Peace Cereal** Fruit, Seed & Nut Muesli

Muesli is granola's healthier cousin-the same whole grains and dried fruit, minus the oil and sweeteners, (\$6) **V, D, P** 



#### **Purely** Elizabeth **Maple Walnut** Probiotic Granola

The probiotics in this granola give your immune and digestive systems a boost, while the sweet-and-salty taste satisfies any craving. (\$7) V, D, G



#### Stonyfield Organic Plain Whole Milk 100% Grassfed **Yogurt**

This yogurt has more anti-inflammatory omega-3 fats than conventional brands. (\$2) O, G, P



#### Wildway **Grain-Free Instant Hot** Cereal

The mix of ground seeds, nuts, dates, and vanilla tastes like classic breakfast porridge but has much more filling fiber and no refined carbs. (\$6) V, D, G, P

> Lunch/\_ Dinner



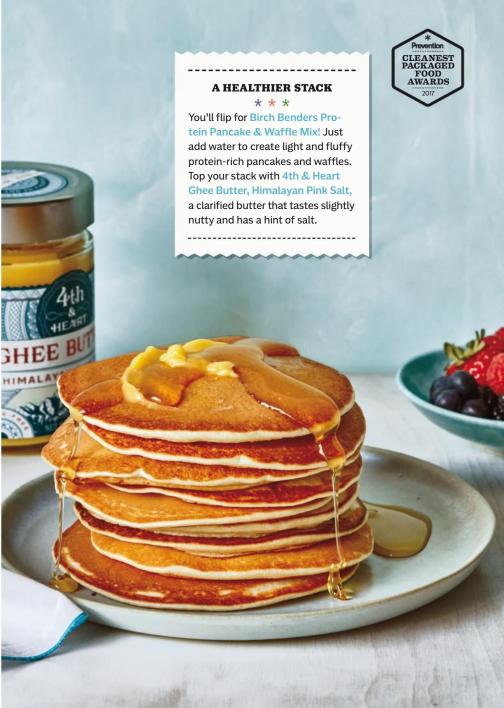
#### Banza Chickpea Pasta Shells with **Classic Cheddar**

This protein-packed mac and cheese is made with chickpea pasta, real cheese, and natural colors and flavors from spices. (\$4) G, P



#### **Diestel Organic Turkey Burgers**

Diestel's turkeys are fed an all-organic diet and never treated with antibiotics. (\$10) O, D, G, P







#### Farmhouse **Culture Organic** Fermented **Orange Ginger** Carrots

These fermented carrots pack plenty of probiotics. With their citrus-ginger kick, they make a great crunchy addition to burgers and salads. (\$7)

O, V, D, G



#### Kashi **Sweet Potato Quinoa Bowl**

Perfectly seasoned quinoa is topped with roasted sweet potato, poblano peppers, tomatoes, and black beans in this tasty meatless meal. (\$4) V, D, G, P



#### Mikey's Pizza Crust

Just load on the toppings and pop the pizza in the oven. You'd never guess this almond flour-based crust is low-carb. (\$15 for 2) D, G, P



#### Nona Lim Thai Curry & Lime Bone **Broth Soup Cup**

After 2 minutes in the microwave, this Asian-inspired broth. which delivers 30% of the daily value of vitamin A and fills you up for only 45 calories, is ready to sip. (\$24 for 6)



#### Safe Catch Elite Wild Tuna Pouch

You can count on this tuna to be sustainably sourced and low in mercury. Pour a pouch onto greens for an easy lunch. (\$40 for 12) D, G, P



#### Siete Foods Almond Flour **Tortillas**

These almondbased tortillas taste totally authentic and have 2.5 g of protein. (\$11 for 8) V, D, G, P





#### Go Raw Sprouted Watermelon Seeds

Crunchy and slightly salty, these proteinand iron-rich seeds make a great on-the-go snack. (\$10) O, V, D, G, P



#### **Health Warrior** Chia Bar. **Dark Chocolate**

Satisfy your chocolate craving for 100 calories with this bar that also contains oats, nuts, and chia seeds. (\$2) V. D. G



#### **Hope Hummus,** Lemon Peppercorn

A fresh take on a classic dip, this hummus works equally well on veggies or a sandwich. (\$4) O. V. D. G



#### **Kettle Brand** Avocado Oil Himalavan Salt **Potato Chips**

These crunchy snacks are made with avocado oil, which contains heart-healthy monounsaturated fats. (\$4)



#### Late July Organic Blue Corn **Cantina Dippers**

Wonderfully crispy and iust salty enough, these chips are easy to dip without dripping. (\$5) O. V. D. G



#### **Living Intentions** Superfood Popcorn. Tandoori Turmeric

Asian spices transform this popcorn-withprobiotics into an otherworldly snack experience. (\$5) O. V. D. G

#### AWARD WINNERS



#### **Mary's Gone** Crackers Super Seed. Everything

Get your everythingbagel fix with these flavorful whole grain crackers made with quinoa, sunflower seeds, and flaxseed. (\$5) O, V, D, G



#### **Organic Prairie Mighty Beef** Jerky, Original

Chewy without being tough, this jerky has only 3 g of sugars per serving. (\$7) O, D, G, P



#### **Our Little Rebellion Bean** Crisps, Salt of the Earth

These baked chips have a nutrient-rich blend of beans, split peas, corn, sunflower oil, and sea salt. (\$4) V, D, G



#### Pamela's Oat **Peanut Butter** Chocolate Chip Whenever Bars

A convenient and delicious way to refuel, these gluten-free bars get their sweetness from agave and coconut sugar. (\$5 for 5)



#### **Quinn Pretzels, Touch of Honey**

Subtle honey flavor sets these pretzels apart from salted varieties-and with their perfectly crunchy texture, you'd never guess they're gluten-free. (\$5) **V**, **D**, **G** 



#### Rojo's Organic Salsa, Medium

With just the right amount of spice and a thick and chunky texture, this salsa pleases almost any palate. (\$5) O, V, D, G





#### Alvarado St. **Bakery Organic Sprouted Wheat** & Oats Bread

Sprouted wheat berries make it easier to absorb this bread's many nutrients. (\$4) O, V, D, P



#### Annie's **Organic Upside Down Ketchup**

This ketchup is free of high fructose corn syrup. (\$3) O, V, D, G



#### **Bob's Red Mill Paleo Baking** Flour

Grain-free baking is easy with this blend of nut-based flours and root starches. (\$14) V, D, G



#### Ellyndale **Organics Virgin Pumpkin Seed Oil**

Move over, olive. This deliciously nutty oil is ideal for dipping bread or dressing salads. (\$10) O, V, D, G



#### 4th & Heart Ghee Butter, Himalavan Pink Salt

Ghee is butter with the milk solids removed, making it suitable for high-heat cooking and for people who are lactose-intolerant. This lightly salted version is great for sautéing veggies. (\$15) G



#### Lucini Rustic **Tomato Basil Organic Sauce**

Unlike many jarred options, this all-natural sauce contains no added sweeteners. (\$8) O, V, D, G





#### Nuttzo **Organic Power Fuel Crunchy** Spread

Meet your morning toast's new BFF. This blend of four nuts and three seeds is more filling than almond butter. (\$13) O, V, D, G, P



#### **Orgain Organic Protein Plant-**Based Powder, Unsweetened

Mix two scoops of this unflavored powder into a smoothie for 21 g of protein and 15% of the daily value for iron. (\$40)O, V, D, G, P



#### **Pacific Organic** Chicken Stock

We love when a classic pantry staple gets a health boost-this stock has nearly 50% more protein than most and no unhealthy additives. (\$5) O, D, G, P



#### **Primal Kitchen Honey Mustard Vinaigrette**

Made with avocado oil and apple cider vinegar, this dressing is a lighter take on creamy honey mustard with all the big flavor. (\$8) **V, D, G** 



#### **DAIRY-FREE AND DELICIOUS**

\* \* \*

With its spot-on texture and cinnamon-sweet cookie chunks, NadaMoo! That Snickerdoodle Dough Coconut Milk Frozen Dessert won over even our dairy-loving testers.





#### **Stonewall** Kitchen Organic **Maine Blueberry Cherry Jam**

This jam contains less sugar than most but still satisfies your sweet tooth. (\$8) O, V, D, G

#### -----\* Beverages \*



#### **Bhakti Sparkling** Tea, Tart Cherry Rooibos

Carbonated rooibos tea and tart cherry juice create a refreshing anti-inflammatory twist on iced tea. (\$3) **V, D, G** 



#### **Honest Tea Organic Unsweet Peach Ginger Tea**

If unsweetened tea is your beverage of choice, this bold brew may become your new favorite. (\$2) O, V, D, G



#### Numi Organic Tea Turmeric Chai **Golden Latte**

This mix lets you make anti-inflammatory golden milk lattes at home-just add hot milk or a nondairy substitute. (\$15) O, V, D, G



#### Royal Hawaiian **Orchards** Macadamia Milk. Unsweetened

Use this dairy alternative as you would regular milk. With its hint of salt and natural sweetness, it's great in coffee and on cereal. (\$8) **V**, **D**, **G** 



#### **Spindrift** Sparkling **Water & Real** Squeezed Fruit, Unsweetened Blackberry

A touch of fruit juice may be just what your sparkling water has been missing. (\$6 for 4) V, D, G



#### Suja Organic Drinking Vinegar, Strawberry Balsamic

This good-for-your-gut beverage is the perfect combo of sweet and sour. Plus, the vinegar's acetic acid curbs carb cravings. (\$3) O, V, D, G

#### -----\* Desserts \*



#### Cappello's Cookie Dough, **Lemon Zest**

This egg-free dough can be eaten raw or baked and tastes like lemon squares. (\$7) V, D, G



#### GoodPop **Coldbrew Coffee** Frozen Pops

Coffee lovers, delight: One pop delivers all the flavor of a frozen coffee drink for only 80 calories. (\$6 for 4)



#### Hungryroot Black Bean **Brownie Batter**

This batter contains an unexpected combo of beans, almond butter, sweet potato, cocoa powder, and natural sweeteners. (\$8)

**V**, **D**, **G** 



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#### NadaMoo! That Snickerdoodle **Dough Coconut** Milk Frozen Dessert

This vegan treat is made with organic coconut milk. (\$6)

**V**, **D**, **G** 



#### **Nature's Path Love Crunch Dark Chocolate** & Red Berries

This granola is great on ice cream or as a standalone dessert. (\$5) O, V, D

Goto prevention.com/ cleanfoods2017 for information on how to purchase these products.



By Leslie Pepper

FROM THE FRONT LINES of health care, these men and women share insider advice on doctors, hospitals, prescription drugs, and more.

Illustrations by Andrea De Santis



### REAL-LIFE ADVICE

## Rethink having elective surgery in July

"New medical school graduates start their residencies then. Also avoid scheduling before a holiday weekendhospitals may be short staffed, and some lab tests and other diagnostic services might not be available."

Bonnie Brown, nurse administrator at Boston University

## **KNOW THE** SIGNS OF AN **ANFURYSM**

"If you experience a severe headache and/or vomiting. vision or speech problems, imbalance, or a change in mental state, you could be having symptoms of a ruptured brain aneurysm, and vou need to call 911 immediately. People sometimes ignore these signs, but if it's the worst headache of your life, you should get checked out immediately."

Kimberly Lombardo and Nicole Salant, nurse practitioners at the Brain Aneurysm Center at North Shore University Hospital



## Help us stay focused

"The worst time to chat with nurses is when they're administering medication or programming equipment like monitors or IV pumps. We want to talk to you, just not while we need to focus on what we're doing so we don't make mistakes."

Kati Kleber, certified critical care nurse in Charlotte, NC

Don't drive yourself to the hospital if you have chest pain

"This sounds obvious, but you'd be surprised how many people do it. You should call 911 instead. EMTs have everything necessary to keep you alive and will alert the hospital that you're coming so that everything and everyone will be ready when you arrive." Karen Yates, chest pain coordinator at Methodist Mansfield Medical Center



# Check your wristband

"When you're admitted to the hospital, make sure the name and date of birth on your wristband are correct. If that wristband falls off during your stay, refuse to do anything until it's back on. Saying that mix-ups occur with patients would be an understatement."

Ruth Tarantine, dean of nursing for

uth Tarantine, dean of nursing for Colorado Technical University



## TELL THE TRUTH

"Developing the most effective plan of care comes largely from listening to a patient's story. I admit patients who are coming in from the emergency room, and believe me, there's nothing you could tell me that I haven't heard before."

Susan Spielman, advanced practice nurse for the division of hospital medicine at Loyola University Medical Center

# Store medical information in your phone

"Line up your medications with their labels showing, take a photo with your phone, and save it. Keep your diagnosis and important numbers in your phone as well so you'll have them when you need them."

Edwin Torres, nurse practitioner in the department of endocrinology at Montefiore Medical Center

## **EXAMINE YOUR MFDICATION**

"Whenever you get a prescription filled, make sure the drug name on the bottle matches what you were prescribed. If you've taken the medication before and a pill looks different from what you're used to, ask the pharmacist why."

Jov Hertzoa. nurse office manager for internal medicine at Summit Medical Group



## Be extra vigilant during admission and discharge

"Mistakes are most likely to happen when you're going in or out of the hospital. Arrive at admissions with a printed medical profile that includes your past medical and surgical in-



Make sure you have someone with you at discharge to take notes or to record what the doctor says, as long as he or she gives permission." Teri Dreher, owner and CEO, NShore Patient Advocates

### Make a mammogram less painful

"Many women ask for a mammogram tech who won't squeeze the life out of their breasts, but the best mammo gets breasts the flattest. The breast tissue needs to be as thin as possible so the x-ray can see through it. That makes the image ideal for detecting cancer, Taking Tylenol an hour before can ease the

discomfort." Lillie Shocknev.

administrative director of the Johns Hopkins Breast Center

## Take a probiotic with an antibiotic

"Antibiotics kill a variety of germs. along with the healthy cells and 'good' gut bacteria that probiotics can help replace."

Nick Angelis. nurse anesthetist at Sacred Heart Hospital in Florida



## **ASK US FOR A RFFFRRAL**

"We have firsthand knowledge about patient outcomes and where patients and their families can go to get the best care and have the best experience."

Pam Cipriano, president of the American Nurses Association



### Have an emergency plan for meds

"If you have a chronic disease, think through how you'll keep enough of your medications on hand. If you need refrigerated insulin, for example, know who sells dry ice in your area in case of a power failure. Or look into getting a small generator for your home."

Sue Anne Bell, clinical associate professor of nursing at the University of Michigan



## Use your call light

"You're not inconveniencing us. We're there to help you, especially when you're trying to get out of bed or go to the bathroom. Falls can increase the length of your stay or cause serious injury. Always err on the side of caution and call for the nurse."

Steve Craig, registered nurse, critical care, Cancer Treatment Centers of America at Southeastern Regional Medical Center

## Take names

"Keep a sheet of paper and a pen near your hospital bed and write down the name and position of everyone who comes into your room. That way, you can say, 'Jane Doe, the nurse practitioner with cardiology, said I might need an echocardiogram.' Whenever something comes to mind

that you want to ask your doctor, write that down, too," Andrea Lackman, nurse practitioner in the cardiology department at Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, FL

## DO THE **RIGHT** RESEARCH

"It's great to inform yourself by doing research online. but some of the information there is off the wall. If you want to look something up, **I** recommend MedlinePlus (medline plus.gov). That's the National Institutes of Health website, and it's full of up-to-date, accurate information about diseases. conditions, and wellness."

Berenice Dooley, primary care nurse practitioner. Cobleskill, NY

## Download a first-aid app

"The American Red Cross First Aid app (redcross .org/apps) provides clear directions on what to do for everything from anaphylaxis to a snakebite. There's also a hospital locator so you can find help quickly if you're traveling." Adelita Cantu, associate professor at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio



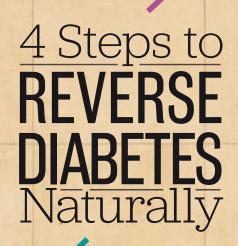
### Get the off-hours phone number

"Ask your health care provider what number to call if you have questions or concerns after hours or on weekends, and find out who will be answering the calls." Sara Todd, registered nurse, MercyCare Health Partners

## Seek a second opinion

"If you're diagnosed with a serious illness like cancer, have your pathology report sent to a comprehensive cancer center or another expert provider. This is your life, and you have every right to a second opinion."

Laurie Musial, assistant vice president for clinical research administration at Roswell Park Cancer Institute



Lower your blood sugar, reduce your medication dependency, and regain your health with this science-backed plan.

> BY SPENCER NADOLSKY AND LOU SCHULER

ASON HADN'T been to a doctor in many years.
At 45, he weighed 255 pounds and had a 43-inch waist. He told me he had been experiencing dizziness and was urinating constantly, as if his bladder had doubled in size and filled twice as fast. I checked his blood sugar. Anything more than 200 mg/dL suggests diabetes. Jason's was close to 400. It was one of the highest random blood sugar tests I'd ever seen. My immediate fear was that he was in a state called diabetic

ketoacidosis, or DKA, a medical condition that's often preceded by the words "potentially fatal." I sent him directly to the emergency room.

I saw him again a week later. This time he had an ambitious goal. The doctors at the hospital had prescribed a relatively high dose of insulin to help reduce his blood sugar, and he wanted to get off it as soon as possible. I explained what he was up against as tactfully as I could. But there was really no sugarcoating the message. His fondness for fast food and aversion to exercise had nearly killed him. The high insulin dose had saved his life by bringing his blood sugar down, and it was now close to the normal range. I agreed to cut his dose in half under two conditions: He had to eat a lot less junk food and get a little more exercise. I also prescribed two other medications, with the understanding that if he followed the program, I'd be able to reduce those as well.

To my surprise, and perhaps to his, he didn't just follow my advice. He exceeded it by walking 2 hours a day. When I saw him a week later, his fasting blood sugar was below 100—normal for a healthy adult without diabetes—and he'd already lost a few pounds. I cut his insulin to the lowest possible dose. A week after that, his blood sugar was still in the healthy range, so I took him off insulin altogether.

### **BOOK EXCERPT**

Jason came to see me once a month. Each time, he was 5 to 10 pounds lighter. In less than a year, he was down to 200 pounds, a loss of 22% of his initial body weight, and had a 36-inch waist. His clothes were falling off. He had a bounce in his step that wasn't there before. On one visit he marveled at how much energy he had; to him, it seemed like it had come from nowhere. But really, it was there all along—or would've been, if the burden of his weight, his diet, his inactivity, and eventually his diabetes hadn't made him feel so tired for so long.

I wish I could guarantee that everyone would get results like Jason's. Unfortunately, life is rarely that simple, especially when that life includes a disease like diabetes. What I can promise is that the right diet, exercise. and lifestyle-management techniques will help you lose weight, increase your fitness, and improve your health. A lighter, better-conditioned, and healthier body is one that's more resistant to just about any disease, especially this one. If you currently have type 2 diabetes, you can lower your dependence on medications and in some cases stop using them. If you don't yet have it, you can avoid it altogether. Here are four steps you can start taking today.

### STEP 1 Build a Better Diet

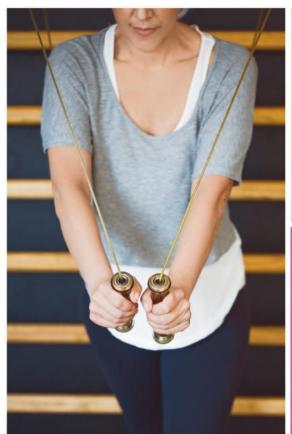
Though it may surprise you, I'm pretty agnostic when it comes to diets. Low-fat, low-carb, Paleo, vegan-all of them can help you lose weight and reverse diabetes. However, I've found that one of the easiest and healthiest ways of

eating-and one that I regularly suggest to my patients—is the Mediterranean diet. Research shows that people who follow it have lower hemoglobin A1c, lose more weight, and are less likely to develop diabetes, compared with those who follow a standard low-fat diet. If you want to try it, keep these simple principles in mind:

- Major sources of carbohydrates should be fresh vegetables and fruits, legumes, and whole grains, more or less in that order.
- Major sources of fat should include olive oil, nuts, fish, and cheese.
- Major sources of protein should include fish, poultry, eggs, legumes, nuts, and cheese, with relatively little red or processed meat.
- Calories from soda, juice, and flavored coffees and teas should be avoided, along with those from fast food, packaged foods, and processed snacks and desserts.
- You don't need to be perfect, but you want to be consistent.

### **STEP 2** Start Moving

This is as close as I can get to providing white-coat medical advice to someone I haven't examined: All ambulatory people should walk for at least 30 minutes a day. It's the bare minimum, and you can't allow yourself to make excuses for not doing it. It's dark outside? Take a flashlight and wear a reflective vest. Cold? Put on thermal underwear, two pairs of socks, and as many sweaters and jackets as you need. Hot? Protect your skin and bring a water bottle.





## WHAT ABOUT CARBOHYDRATES?

Limit carbs to 40 net grams per meal and 20 per snack to help control your blood sugar. Nutrition labels tell you how many grams of carbs and how much fiber each serving contains. To calculate net grams, subtract the fiber from the carbs, then multiply by the number of servings you eat.







### CAN'T SLEEP?

Power down your electronics at least an hour before bed, avoid caffeine for 6 hours before, keep your pets out of the bedroom, and limit your alcohol intake to one or two drinks per week with dinner at the latest—each of these steps can improve sleep.

And if 30 minutes a day isn't enough for you to see the results you want, here's how to make progress:

- Increase the frequency. Aim for a short walk after every meal. If that's not practical, at least get up and stretch every half hour or so.
- Increase the duration. When 30 minutes becomes a cinch, increase your daily walk to 45 minutes, then 60. And if you get the opportunity, go really long by hitting a trail and taking a hike.
- Increase the challenge. Find a route that includes hills or stairs. You'll increase muscle strength on the way up and muscle resiliency on the way down.
- Increase the speed. The faster you walk, the more muscle power you build. And the more muscle power you have, the faster and farther you'll be able to walk in the future.

### STEP 3 Strength-Train

Strength exercise works on the principle of progressive resistance: When you challenge yourself with increasingly

heavy weights, your muscles adapt by getting stronger. Overcoming that resistance stimulates a process that increases your metabolism and, over time, helps vou keep blood sugar levels in check.

You'll get the best results if you do a full-body strength-training routine two or three times a week and allow at least 48 hours between workouts. The classic schedule is Monday-Wednesday-Friday.

The exercises I recommend-like squats, lunges, push-ups, rows, and biceps curls—mimic natural movement patterns. Before long you'll find it easier to get up and down, to lift and carry things, and to adjust to life's shifting speeds and random challenges.

### STEP 4 Make Sleep a Priority

Over the past half century or so, Americans have curtailed their sleep by an estimated 1.5 to 2 hours per night. During that same time period, the rates of obesity and diabetes have risen dramatically. That doesn't mean poor

sleep causes obesity or diabetes, but there's good reason to believe they're connected in a destructive loop.

Here's how it works: One night, you get less sleep, for whatever reason work, stress and anxiety, or personal choices like staying up late to watch TV. Then, the next day, your shortened or disrupted sleep throws off key hormones that regulate appetite. Your appetite increases, and sleep deprivation causes specific cravings for sugar and fat to develop. You also burn fewer calories during the day because of a drop in a key thyroid hormone. Additionally, cortisol, a stress hormone, rises, along with a group of hormones linked to inflammation. These trigger insulin resistance, even in healthy young people who aren't overweight.

So how much sleep do you really need to get back on track and safeguard your health? The "healthy average" is 7.5 hours a night, and a substantial body of research shows that the farther you get from the average in either direction, the higher your risk of diabetes. |

Adapted from The Natural Way to Beat Diabetes: A Total Life Plan to Help You Lose Weight, Gain Energy, and Take Control of Your Health (Rodale, 2017, naturalwayto beatdiabetes.com). Spencer



Nadolsky is a board-certified family and obesity medicine physician based in Olney, MD. He encourages his patients to focus on diet and exercise while avoiding or at least minimizing medications whenever possible.

# Myths About abetes

- 1. Being overweight causes the disease. Obesity is certainly linked to diabetes—globally, obesity and diabetes have increased in tandem-but not all fat is equally risky. Belly fat has different metabolic effects than fat on other parts of your body does, which is why waist size is used to assess a patient's health status.
- 2. Being thin protects you. Muscle tissue is vour best defense against diabetes. And, all else being equal. a lean and fit body is usually a healthy body. But not all thin people are metabolically healthy. Some have more fat (and much less muscle) than people classified as overweight or even obese. And in rare cases, people who are both lean and fit develop diabetes. The only way to know for certain is to get your blood sugar tested, especially if you're over 45.
- 3. Eating sugar causes diabetes. Diabetes risk escalates when you overeat any food, not just sugar. That said, once you have the disease, or if you're at high risk, you absolutely should clean up your diet, starting by removing highly processed foods that include added sugars.
- 4. Once you have diabetes, you have it for life. This is unfortunately true for type 1 diabetes. But with type 2, it's possible to reverse the symptoms and regain your health, and most people in the early stages of the disease can see dramatic improvements. For some, it will be as if they never had it at all.

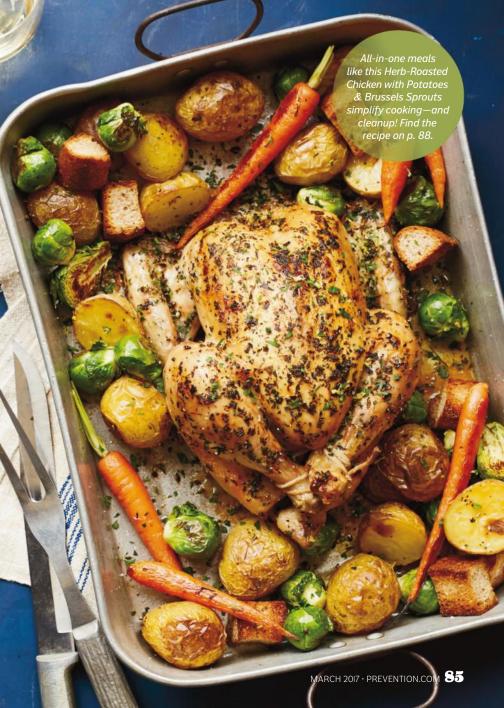


# 6 Easy ONE-PAN SUPPERS

By Khalil Hymore

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CON POULOS

MINIMAL EFFORT FOR MAXIMUM FLAVOR: OUR SIMPLE, NUTRITIOUS DISHES WILL TRANSFORM YOUR DINNER ROUTINE!



# PISTACHIO-CRUSTED HALIBUT WITH GREEN BEANS

SERVES 4 • PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES • TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES

The nutty crust adds more than crunch to this low-fat fish entrée it also provides protein, fiber, and a high dose of anti-inflammatory omega-3s.

- 1½ lb green beans, trimmed
- 1 c frozen pearl onions, thawed
- 4 tsp olive oil
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 11/4 lb halibut
- ⅓ c shelled pistachios, finely chopped

Heat oven to 425°F. Coat large sheet pan with cooking spray. Add beans and onions, drizzle with 3 tsp of the oil, sprinkle with ½ tsp each of the salt and pepper, and toss to coat. Combine mustard and remaining oil, salt, and pepper. Brush over top of fish. Place pistachios on

shallow plate and press top of fish into nuts. Lay fish, skin side down, on sheet pan. Roast until beans and onions are tender and fish flakes, 15 to 20 minutes.

NUTRITION (per serving) 331 cal, 35 g pro, 21 g carb, 6 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 14 g fat, 2 g sat fat, 718 mg sodium





# BEEF & BULGUR STUFFED PEPPERS WITH TZATZIKI SAUCE

SERVES 8 • PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES • TOTAL TIME: 50 MINUTES A beef-based meal can still be healthy when meat portions are kept small and paired with antioxidant-rich peppers and high-fiber bulgur.

8 med bell peppers, halved lengthwise

⅓ c bulgur

1 lb lean ground beef

½ c + 2 Tbsp chopped dill

1/4 c + 2 Tbsp chopped mint

1/4 c pine nuts

1/4 c raisins

2 tsp ground cumin

1 tsp cinnamon

1 sm yellow onion, chopped

4 cloves garlic, minced

1½ tsp kosher salt

1½ tsp black pepper

1½ c fat-free Greek yogurt 2 Tbsp lemon juice

1 cucumber, diced

Heat oven to 400°F. Coat.

large sheet pan with cooking spray and set pepper halves on it. Soak bulgur in boiling water 15 minutes. Drain. Mix bulgur with beef, 1/4 cup each of the dill and mint, pine nuts, raisins, cumin, cinnamon, onion, 3 cloves of the garlic, and

1 tsp each of the salt and pepper. Press golf ball-size portions into peppers. Roast until meat is cooked through, 20 to 25 minutes. Combine yogurt, lemon juice, cucumber, and remaining herbs, garlic, salt, and pepper. Serve peppers topped with sauce.

**NUTRITION** (per serving) 240 cal, 19 g pro, 21 g carb, 5 g fiber, 10 g sugars, 9.5 g fat, 2.5 g sat fat, 425 mg sodium

# HERB-ROASTED CHICKEN WITH POTATOES & BRUSSELS SPROUTS

SERVES 4 • PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES • TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR 40 MINUTES

This hearty dish provides an abundance of flavor and nutrition, including lean protein, zinc, iron, B vitamins, and 100% of the daily value of vitamin C.

½ lb baby Yukon gold potatoes

½ lb sm carrots, with tops 4½ tsp olive oil

1 whole chicken (about 3 lb) ½ c chopped fresh parsley

2 Tbsp chopped fresh thyme

4 tsp lemon zest

1 tsp kosher salt

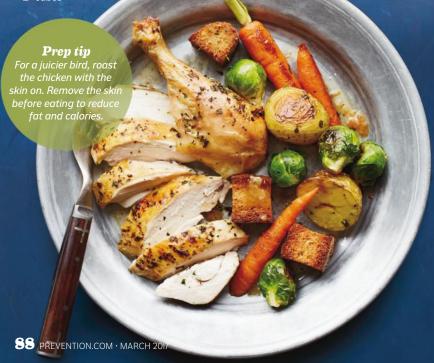
1 tsp black pepper

1 lb brussels sprouts, trimmed

½ loaf whole wheat baguette, cut into 1" cubes Heat oven to 450°F. Coat sheet pan with cooking spray. Add potatoes, carrots, and 1½ tsp of the oil, and toss to coat. Add chicken and drizzle with 1½ tsp oil. Sprinkle herbs, lemon zest, salt, and pepper over chicken and vegetables. Roast 20 minutes, then reduce heat to 375°F. Toss

sprouts and bread with remaining oil. Add to pan, and roast until meat thermometer registers 165°F when inserted into thickest part, 40 minutes. Rest chicken 15 minutes and serve with vegetables and croutons.

**NUTRITION** (per serving, without skin) 428 cal, 42 g pro, 39 g carb, 8 g fiber, 6 g sugars, 12.5 g fat, 2.5 g sat fat, 833 mg sodium





SERVES 8 • PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES • TOTAL TIME: 35 MINUTES From the whole wheat crust to the nutrient-packed veggies and calcium-rich cheese, this pie delivers healthy goodness.

1½ lb whole wheat pizza dough, room temperature ¼ c pesto

8 oz fresh mozzarella, sliced 1 c baby spinach

1 sm bunch broccolini, sliced into 2" pieces

1 sm zucchini, thinly sliced 2 oz prosciutto, thinly sliced

Heat oven to 475°F. Coat large sheet pan with cooking spray and press dough to pan edges. Poke dough all over with fork and bake until beginning to turn golden, 8 minutes. Remove from oven, brush dough with pesto, and top with cheese, then spinach, broccolini, and zucchini. Coat top with cooking spray and bake until crust is golden brown and cheese is melted, 8 minutes more. Top with prosciutto, and season with black pepper to taste.

NUTRITION (per serving) 304 cal, 16 g pro, 39 g carb, 7 g fiber, 1 g sugars, 11.5 g fat, 3.5 g sat fat, 668 mg sodium

## **Prep tip** For a veaetarian version,

FOC

substitute 8 oz sautéed shiitake mushrooms for the prosciutto. Don't need a pie this large? Cut the dough in half and make two small pizzas and freeze one.

## EGGPLANT PARMESAN WITH ASPARAGUS

SERVES 4 • PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES • TOTAL TIME: 40 MINUTES

Traditional eggplant parm can be a fat-and-calorie bomb. But by eliminating frying and using whole wheat bread crumbs, this lightened-up version slashes fat and increases fiber.

2 c whole wheat panko bread crumbs

34 c all-purpose flour

2 lg eggs, beaten

2 med eggplants, cut into 16 ½"-thick slices

2 c marinara sauce

6 oz fresh mozzarella, cut into 8 slices

1 lb asparagus, trimmed Fresh basil, grated Parmesan, and black pepper for serving Heat oven to 375°F. Lightly coat large sheet pan with cooking spray. Place bread crumbs, flour, and eggs in 3 separate shallow dishes. Coat each eggplant slice in flour, then egg, and finally bread crumbs. Arrange in even layer on sheet pan. Bake 10 minutes, flip, and cook until eggplant is almost tender, 8 minutes more. Top each slice with 2 Tbsp of the marinara and stack in twos. Place 1 slice

cheese over each stack and stack in fours, creating 4 stacks. Add asparagus to pan and lightly coat with cooking spray. Bake until cheese is melted and asparagus is crisp-tender, 8 minutes more. Serve eggplant and asparagus topped with basil, Parmesan, and pepper to taste.

NUTRITION (per serving) 446 cal, 23 g pro, 52 g carb, 14 g fiber, 11 g sugars, 17 g fat, 8 g sat fat, 797 mg sodium





## Prep tip

Raw (not precooked) chicken sausage is much leaner than pork. If you don't see it at your grocery store, ask the butcher.

## SAUSAGE & PEPPER HOAGIES

SERVES 4 • PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES • TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES

These sandwiches won't sink your health: They supply all the delicious taste of the classic for a fraction of the calories and saturated fat.

1 lg bell pepper, sliced 1 sm yellow onion, sliced 2 tsp olive oil ½ tsp black pepper

4 sweet Italian chicken sausages

FOOD STYLING BY KHALIL HYMORE; PROP STYLING BY PAOLA ANDREA

4 sm multigrain hoagie rolls, split

Baby arugula and mustard (optional), for serving

Heat oven to 400°F. Coat sheet pan with cooking spray. Add bell pepper and onion; drizzle with oil, sprinkle with pepper, and toss to coat. Nestle sausages among vegetables. Roast, stirring once, until sausages are cooked and vegetables are tender,

about 20 minutes. Place rolls in oven directly on rack to warm, 2 to 3 minutes. Serve sausage and vegetables on rolls topped with arugula and mustard, if using.

NUTRITION (per serving) 403 cal, 23 g pro, 39 g carb, 6 g fiber, 8 g sugars, 17.5 g fat, 5 g sat fat, 1,021 mg sodium

# Watch the Pet's Meds

Some over-the-counter medicines can work for your pet. Others can be toxic.

BY JEN MCCAFFERY



ou consider your pet one of the family, but it still might surprise you to learn that parts of your dog's or cat's anatomy—

stomach, intestines, lungs—are similar to those in humans. As a result, some of the drugs veterinarians prescribe are chemically identical to those made for people.

### What pets can take

These are some of the OTC meds that yets often prescribe for dogs and cats:

- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) and other antihistamines for a pet with allergies
- Meclizine (Dramamine) for nausea
- Hydrocortisone and antibiotic ointments to soothe and heal insect bites and small skin wounds
- Famotidine (Pepcid) for acid reflux
- Artificial tears for eye irritation

### What you need to know

Given this information, you might be tempted to skip the vet visit and medicate your pet on your own—but you shouldn't. Vets are best qualified to determine the safe and effective dosage based on your animal's size, breed, and health history. "Medications that may be great options for one animal might not be good for another, and there are issues of drug interactions that only a vet can address," says Susan Nelson, a clinical associate professor at Kansas State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. If your vet does prescribe a drug for your pet, ask whether an OTC "people" drug can be used and whether this option will save you money.

## **CAUTION:** PAIN MFDS

"We have to be very careful about using anything for pets that's marketed as a pain reliever for people," says Patrick Mahanev, a holistic veterinarian based in California. Here are some that can be harmful and should never be given unless prescribed by a vet.

### Acetaminophen (Tvlenol)

Toxic for cats. Sometimes prescribed for dogs.

### Aspirin

Generally not safe for cats. OK in some cases. for dogs, depending on their medical history.

### Bismuth subsalicylate (Kaopectate, Pepto-Bismol)

Contains a substance similar to aspirin, so can be toxic for cats. Sometimes prescribed for dogs.

### Ibuprofen (Advil)

Can shut down kidney function and cause GI ulcers in cats and dogs.

### Naproxen (Aleve)

Can cause kidney and liver damage and GI ulcers in cats and dogs.



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On the **Ask the Sleep Doctor** forum, Shelby Harris, director of the behavioral sleep medicine program at Montefiore Medical Center, will answer the questions that keep you up at night.

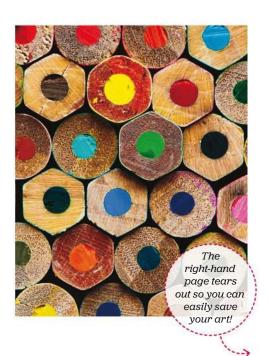


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## Connect the Dots

Draw first, then color for real creative calm

BY NORA HORVATH





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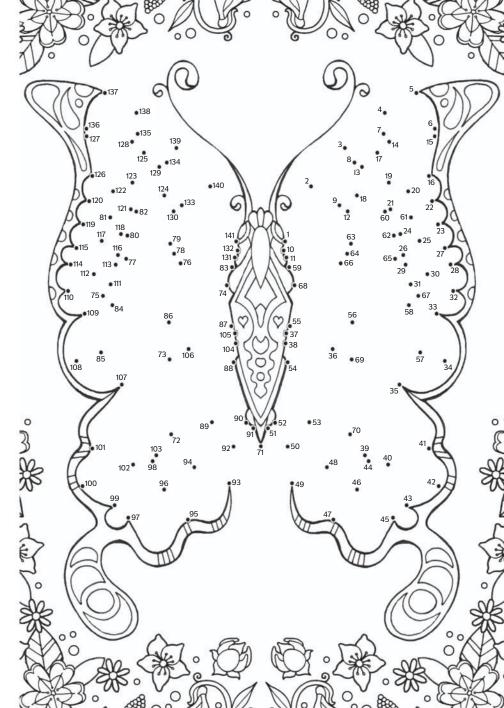
#PreventionArtTherapy.

**OT-TO-DOT** drawing can transform a blank page into beauty with little skill required. "All you need is the ability to draw a line, and in a few minutes you have something that could be worthy of being framed," says Thomas Pavitte, creator of the 1000 Dot-to-Dot series of books featuring sophisticated dot images.

The simple process of connecting dots can be absorbing without feeling overwhelming. Psychology experts call this state of contentment while immersed in a creative endeavor "flow."

Many artistic activities, such as knitting or playing a musical instrument, can bring about this feeling of stress-free satisfaction. One option is to connect the dots at right. See what image emerges, then color the page for even more calm. You just might find yourself going with the flow.

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