

Healthcare News

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INSURANCE SERVICES

Health Topic of the Month: Healthy Aging

It's happening every day. (Every day!) There's no denying it. We are all getting older. And so, if we are all on this one-way street, we might as well find ways to make the journey as smooth as possible. But because you've heard lots of this advice before, we decided to give you a few new ideas about how to age gracefully.

Keep a Sharp Mind

Who needs another crossword puzzle when you can debate with one of those darn kids? Call up a grandchild and get into a healthy conversation about something interesting. Politics, money, and education are just a few spicy topics that you can cover with your grandchild, while likely irking your adult children for talking about a controversial topic. Teach that kid a thing or two!

Move That Body

Go for another walk at the mall? No thank you. How about you and a friend go blast some music at the park and get to dancing? Chances are you will make a few new friends and spread some cheer in an otherwise respectable park. Salsa, jitterbug, and golden oldies are just a few kinds of music that need to come back into public spaces. Out-blast those teenagers and their noisy iPods!



Make New Friends

Who needs another checkers game at the local senior center? You are much better off going to the local dog park with some treats to give out. After you hand over a few dog bones, you'll be the hit of the (dog) party. You can really make some friends if you have a tennis ball for an impromptu game of fetch.

Visit the Doctor

An annual visit the doctor is serious business. And you don't want to disrupt business, but you can brighten everyone's day with a flashy new Hawaiian shirt. Plus, be sure to read name badges and use everyone's name. You might even see an uptick in your quality of care if you personalize your questions. "Nurse Brad, should I take Viagra everyday or only as needed?"

Eat Well

Eat more peanut butter! OK, you don't want to gain weight as you get older, but it's time to eat better quality food. As you get older, you should eat fewer processed foods but eat more basic ingredients. Don't eat a hotdog, have an egg. Don't eat boxed cereal, have oatmeal.

Why the Plant-Based Nutrition Craze?

Suddenly Veggie Burgers, Impossible Burgers, and Beyond Meat are widely available. But why? The increase in non-meat foods in the last year comes off the heels of research showing that processed meats are linked to several major health problems, like cancer. But eating an Impossible Burger doesn't mean you have to become a card-carrying vegan or vegetarian. (FYI... most vegetarians aren't trying to recruit you anyway.)

In short, it's healthy to eat more plant-based foods and fewer animal-based foods. There's nothing wrong with milk or eggs or chicken—they are all healthy choices for high quality protein. However, black beans, walnuts, and potatoes can give you lots of protein without the added saturated fats.

Plant-based foods also come with fewer of the preservatives, additives, antibiotics, and hormones that you'll find in meat. Keep in mind, not all meat is created equal. Buying chicken from a local, organic farmer gets you a higher-quality meat than a factory-produced salami.

Plants also come with the fiber and vitamins that are missing from so many of our diets. Generally, raw fruits and vegetables are the healthiest foods for your body. Plant-based foods like bread are also great for the body. But keep in mind not all bread is good either. Factory-made white bread might be considered vegan or vegetarian, but there's almost no essential nutrients in it.



Your Coffee Choices

Now that coffee houses are on nearly every street corner in America, you should be able to order exactly what you want. Here's your cheat-sheet.

Brewed Coffee

This is normal, American coffee. But be careful, these coffee houses make this kind of coffee very dark and very strong.

Espresso

This is a concentrated coffee. Generally, two shots of espresso will equal the caffeine in one 16-ounce coffee.

Latte

A latte is cup of hot milk with espresso. Add vanilla, and it's a vanilla latte.

Americano

An Americano is a few shots of espresso with hot water. Generally this will have a smoother taste over a brewed coffee. Why is it called an Americano? During WWII the American soldiers in Italy and France wanted their Mr. Coffee (brewed coffee) from home. So the Europeans would mix espresso with hot water for the "Americanos."

Cappuccino

A cappuccino is like a latte; it's hot milk and espresso. However about half of the milk comes as a frothy milk foam.

Frappe/Frappuccino

Frappes and Frappuccinos are cold, blended coffee drinks. (Frappuccino is a trademark of Starbucks, so you are not likely to see this term at the independent coffee houses.)

Medicine cabinet essentials

Isopropyl Alcohol

Otherwise known as rubbing alcohol, it is a sterilizing agent that is ideal for cleaning off personal care items like toe clippers and tweezers. Add it to a spray bottle to quickly spray down the sink and toilet.

Hydrogen Peroxide

This is a great way to clean off cuts and scrapes before applying a band-aid. If you feel it sting and see it fizzle, you'll know it's working. Follow the directions and use it as a mouthwash to help clean your teeth and gums. You can also splash some on your toothbrush to sanitize it.

Antibiotic Ointment

Once you've cleaned and dried that cut or scrape, dab on a bit of antibiotic ointment to help reduce the chances of infection.

Antifungal

Sometimes a minor rash won't go away and can't be fixed with antibiotics. You might even have a bit of broken skin. It might be an indication you are suffering from a fungal infection. Antifungals come in both sprays and creams. There are also several different kinds of antifungal treatments to battle a variety of fungal infections.

Bandages, Gauze, and Medical Tape

A clean and sterile Band-Aid or bandage will go a long way in reducing healing time. Once the problem seems under control, however, Mom recommends a little bit of "air therapy" to let the problem area dry out.

Aspirin

According to WebMD, aspirin is one of the oldest ways to treat general pain and fever. Always follow directions.



Ibuprofen

You most likely know ibuprofen by its common brand name, Advil. According to WebMD, ibuprofen is a great way to reduce pain caused by swelling. It's used to help with headache, dental pain, muscle aches, fever, and arthritis. Always follow directions.

Acetaminophen

Commonly known as Tylenol, acetaminophen is another drug to help with pain and fever. Because it works in the body differently from aspirin and ibuprofen, having all three, including acetaminophen, assures that you have a good chance at addressing any minor aches or pains. Always follow directions.

Anti-Diarrhea Medication

A bad stomach problem can dehydrate you quickly. Have an anti-diarrhea medication like Pepto-Bismol to calm your system. Always follow directions.

Autumn Kicks Off in September

There are lots of vegetables that are only available in September and October. Sugar pumpkins are the tiny decorative pumpkins that look great on a Thanksgiving table. But these tiny pumpkins are edible, and they make for a great alternative to more traditional side dishes like butternut squash and mashed potatoes. For this recipe, we suggest adding a little bit of chili powder to balance out the sweetness in the maple syrup. If you are looking for a savory and sweet balance, add a bit of garlic powder or onion instead of chili powder.

Ingredients

- Sugar pumpkins—one per person
- 1 teaspoon butter per pumpkin
- 1 teaspoon of maple syrup per pumpkin
- Chili powder

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Carve out the top of the tiny pumpkin—just like you would with a big pumpkin. Scrape out the seeds. Add butter and maple syrup inside the pumpkin. For a bit of spice, add a dash of chili powder.

Replace the pumpkin lid and put the pumpkins in a baking pan. Be sure add a little water to the bottom of the pan. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30 minutes or until tender.



For a faster cooking time, you can cook one or two pumpkins in the microwave—about 13 minutes.

