Healthy People Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2018

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ONEDIGITAL HEALTH AND BENEFITS

This newsletter is interactive! Click a topic to jump directly to the article.

National Health Observances

SEPTEMBER | 2018

Baby Safety Month

Blood Cancer Awareness Month

Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

Cholesterol Education Month

Drug-Free Pain Management Awareness Month

Food Safety Education Month

Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month

Pain Awareness Month

Prostate Health Month

Thyroid Cancer Awareness Month

Healthcare Environmental Services Week (9-15)

Youth Suicide Prevention Week (9-15)

Balance Awareness Week (16-22)

Clean Hands Week (16-22)

Prostate Cancer Awareness Week (16-22)

Women's Health and Fitness Day (26)

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BETTERSAFE
WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

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IS YOUR COCKTAIL HOUR
Turning Toxic?

Birthdays, parties, special occasions or just at dinner—there's usually plenty of occasions and reasons to raise your glass. Unfortunately, many American adults may be overdoing it. According to a National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 26.9 percent of people ages 18 or older reported binge drinking on at least one occasion a month and 7 percent reported that they engaged in heavy alcohol use on a monthly basis.

Excessive alcohol intake can increase your risk for several chronic conditions, including liver disease and some cancers. Alcohol abuse can also have a negative impact on your job, relationships and safety—both yours and those around you.

KEEP YOUR COCKTAILS IN CHECK

If you drink, the following tips can help ensure you're not overdoing it, and only drinking in moderation.

Track your drinking. You may be drinking a lot without realizing it. Every time you have a drink, write down the day, time, location, and how much. Do this for a few weeks or a month. This journal will help you become mindful of your drinking as well as help you identify how much you may need to cut down.

Set goals and limits. Based off your tracking, set goals and limits to your drinking. If you drink daily, you may want to pick a day or two during the week not to drink. Or you may want to completely abstain for a week or longer. Taking a break from alcohol can be a good way to start drinking less.

Follow "best practices" when you drink. When you drink, follow these strategies:

- Drink slowly; sip your drink
- Drink water before and after having an alcoholic beverage
- Don't drink on an empty stomach

Go public and ask for support. Let friends and family members know that you're making an effort to drink less. Ask for their support during this time. Letting them know can help reduce temptation (i.e., they will be less inclined to invite you out for drinks or offer you drinks).

Expect setbacks, but don't give up. As with trying to form any habit, it's common to have a setback. It often takes several attempts to successfully cut down or stop drinking altogether—so stick with it.

If you're still finding it difficult to cut back on your drinking contact your doctor or health care provider.

WHAT'S MODERATE?

Moderate drinking is defined as no more than 1 drink per day for women and no more than 2 drinks per day for men.

WHAT COUNTS AS A DRINK?

- 1 can of beer (12 oz)
- 1 glass of wine (5 oz)
- 1 shot of liquor (1.5 oz)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines binge drinking as five or more alcoholic drinks for males or four or more alcoholic drinks for females on the same occasion (i.e., at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other) on at least one day in the past month. SAMHSA defines heavy alcohol use as binge drinking on five or more days in the past month.

Source: https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/overview-alcohol-consumption/alcohol-facts-and-statistics



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DAY IN DAY OUT
WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR LIFESTYLE



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TUMMY TROUBLES?

How to Tackle Common Stomach Woes

Most people don't like to publicly talk about certain tummy troubles. Indeed, admitting that you have diarrhea or bad gas in front of co-workers or friends would probably be a little (or a lot) embarrassing. Fortunately, a good amount of stomach problems are temporary and harmless.

Here's what you need to know and what you can do if you're struck with one of these common (but often not talked about) tummy conditions.

TUMMY TROUBLE: **DIARRHEA**

Diarrhea happens to everyone. In fact, most adults will experience it several times a year. The condition occurs when there's an infection in the intestinal tract, which can be caused by a variety of bacterial, viral or parasitic organisms. Infection is spread through contaminated food or drinking-water, or from person-to-person as a result of poor hygiene. Diarrhea can also be caused by medications or even stress can cause diarrhea.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

In most cases, diarrhea will subside in a few hours or a day. If you're suffering from the condition:

Hydrate. When you have diarrhea you can quickly lose fluids. Take frequent, small sips of water until your bout subsides. You also lose essential salts in your body when you have this condition, so having a few salty snacks like pretzels or crackers can help replace lost sodium.

Avoid spicy foods. They can further irritate an upset stomach. You'll also want to avoid highly acidic foods like citrus fruits as well as alcohol and caffeine until all your symptoms have disappeared.

Consider an over-the-counter anti-diarrheal medicine if you have a severe case or if you have to be in a public place or are travelling.

Keep in mind that you can help prevent diarrhea by washing your hands frequently.

TUMMY TROUBLE: **GASSINESS**

Practically no one likes to admit they've passed gas, but the truth of the matter is that most of us pass gas anywhere from 13 to 21 times a day! Gas can be caused by swallowing too much air and/or bacteria in the gut that helps digest food. Gas can cause discomfort and cramping, and can ultimately be a source of embarrassment if you "let one slip" in public.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Try drinking through a straw. It can help ensure you swallow less air. Avoiding chewing gum and hard candy can also help you from swallowing excess air that causes gassiness.

Identify your triggers. Many high fiber foods can cause gas. Of course, you don't want to cut down on healthy fruits, vegetables and beans and legumes. Instead, try to keep track of what causes you to feel bloated and gassy. Maybe it's a combination of foods that causes gas or the amount you're eating. Tracking how your body responds is a great first step. If you know eating broccoli causes gas for you, maybe you can hold off until dinner as opposed to having it at lunch when you're around co-workers.

TUMMY TROUBLE: **BLOATING**

Aside from making your middle appear larger, bloating can be downright uncomfortable. Bloating often arises from overeating, eating too fast and/or constipation.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Eat smaller portions. Overeating is probably the most common cause of bloating. Smaller portions should help eliminate bloating and discomfort.

Reduce or eliminate fried and greasy foods. Fried, fatty foods can make you feel uncomfortably stuffed. Additionally, many greasy foods, including fried chips and meats also are high in sodium. Sodium-rich foods can cause or worsen bloating associated with water retention.

Take your time when eating. Eating too fast can cause you to overeat and thus feel bloated and uncomfortable after a meal. It can take up to 20 minutes for your brain to tell your stomach it's full. Take your time with each bite and eat at a table and not at your desk or in front of the TV where you'll be distracted and not fully focused on eating.



TAKECHARGE
WELCOA'S SELF-CARE BULLETIN

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RINGING IN YOUR EARS?

What It Is & What You Can Do About It

If you regularly hear ringing, buzzing, clicking or hissing sounds but there's no external sound causing it, you may have tinnitus. Tinnitus (TIN-ih-tus) is the perception of noise or ringing in the ears. The noise may vary in pitch from a low hum to a high squeal, and you may hear it in one or both ears. In some cases, the sound can be so loud it can interfere with your ability to concentrate or hear other sounds around you.

Tinnitus isn't a health condition itself, rather a symptom of an underlying condition, such as age-related hearing loss, an ear injury or a circulatory issue.

SHOULD YOU SEE YOUR DOCTOR?

Although it can indeed prove to be an annoyance, tinnitus usually isn't a sign of something serious. However, if you have a ringing or buzzing sound that's not going away and it's bothering you, see your doctor. You'll also want to give your healthcare provider a call if:

- You develop tinnitus after a respiratory infection, such as a cold, and your tinnitus doesn't improve within a week.
- You have tinnitus that occurs suddenly or without an apparent cause.
- You have hearing loss or dizziness with the tinnitus.

Your doctor will first look to identify any underlying conditions that may be causing your tinnitus. The treatment plan he/she recommends will be based on what's identified. For example, sometimes blood vessel conditions can cause tinnitus. If your doctor finds this is the case, he/she may prescribe a certain medication or change your current medications (if you're taking any).

SELF-CARE

For many people, tinnitus can improve with treatment. Many treatments focus on reducing or masking the bothersome noise and include:

White noise machines. Background noise tends to drown out tinnitus sounds. Most department stores offer white noise devices that produce simulated sounds such as falling rain or ocean waves. Or, you can just try turning on a fan or playing some music on low volume to help alleviate the ringing or buzzing noise you hear.

Masking devices. Masking devices are worn in the ear, similar to hearing aids, and produce a continuous, low-level white noise that suppresses tinnitus symptoms.

Stress reduction and/or meditation techniques. Relaxation and stress reduction techniques like yoga, deep breathing or meditation may help you divert your focus from the irritations in your life. Try to find a relaxation technique that works for you (this is good advice if you suffer from tinnitus or not!).

These treatments have been proven effective by many who suffer from tinnitus. In other cases, the sound(s) can go away on their own with no treatment.

COMMON SIGNS OF HEARING LOSS

Hearing loss tends to become more common as we age, but it can indeed occur at any stage of life (especially if it's noised-induced hearing loss). Here are the common signs of hearing loss: Trouble understanding phone conversations

- Difficulty hearing when background noise (not at a high volume) is present
- Feeling as though everyone talking to you is not speaking clearly or that they're mumbling
- Frequently asking people to repeat themselves
- Frequently misunderstanding what people say
- Consistent complaints or comments that you're talking loudly or have your music or TV on too loud

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TOYOURHEALTH
WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN



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BACK TO BASICS

Don't Forget the Benefits of Hand Washing

As we leave summer behind and enter into fall and winter, we so too enter the cold and flu season. While you should indeed get your yearly flu shot, don't mistakenly think that vaccinations can protect you from every illness or from getting sick altogether. To be sure, the very basic act of hand washing can protect your health just as well as some of our most recent and sophisticated treatments.

Good old-fashioned hand washing is one of the simplest and most important things you can do to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Proper washing removes germs from your hands. If you have harmful germs on your hands and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth you can get sick.



WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO WASH YOUR HANDS?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) you can effectively wash your hands and help prevent the spread of germs and disease in about 30 seconds:

- **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (it doesn't matter if the water is cold or warm).
- Apply soap and **lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap.
- **Scrub** for at least 20 seconds.
- **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
- **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

IS ANTIBACTERIAL SOAP REALLY BETTER?

Studies reveal that there is no added health benefit of using soaps containing or advertising antibacterial ingredients compared with using plain soap (this does not include

professionals in a healthcare setting). In fact, plain soap may do a better job of preserving the beneficial bacteria on your hands. Believe it or not, your entire body is covered with natural bacteria, and if you remove this "good" bacteria, it can be replaced by another, potentially harmful kind.

ARE HAND SANITIZERS EFFECTIVE?

Several studies show that hand sanitizers work well and are ideal in healthcare settings like hospitals because hands often come into contact with germs but are generally not heavily soiled or greasy. Hand sanitizers can also be beneficial during cold and flu season. For example, if you sneeze, it's much easier to clean your hands with sanitizer (especially if you're in a public place and far from a bathroom) as opposed to getting up and washing your hands.

However, when your hands become visibly dirty or greasy (i.e., after handling food, being outside, playing sports, etc.) hand sanitizers are not as effective. When your hands are heavily soiled or greasy, hand sanitizers may not work well. Hand washing with soap and water is the best way to reduce the number of harmful germs in these situations.

THE PROPER WAY TO APPLY HAND SANITIZERS

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Apply it to the palm of one hand and rub your hands together. Rub the sanitizer on your hands and fingers until dry (don't dry or wipe it off with a towel).



WHEN TO USE HAND SANITIZERS

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

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