

TOP HEALTH[®]

We Care About Your Health

The Health Promotion and Wellness Newsletter

OCTOBER 2007



More from Your Medicine

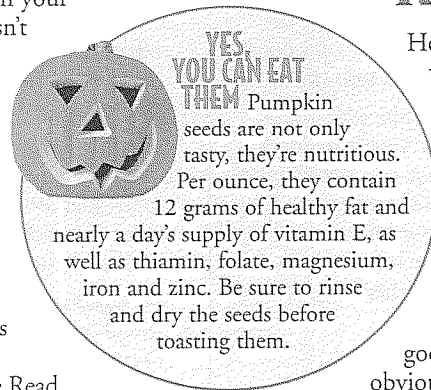
Today's medications can work wonders, but only if they're used correctly. *Here's how to work with your health care provider to get the most from your medicine:*

1 Don't hide details. Tell your health care provider about every medication you're taking — including nonprescription medicines, nutritional supplements and herbal products (alcohol use too). This can help avoid potentially harmful interactions.

2 Take the prescribed dose. Dosages are often based on age, weight and the minimum amount needed to reach the treatment goal without causing side effects. Never adjust the dosage on your own. If the medicine doesn't seem to be working, consult your health care provider.

3 Time it right. Ask your provider or pharmacist when it is best to take the medication and whether it should be taken with or without food. These factors can greatly affect a drug's effectiveness. *If you forget:* Read the printout supplied by the pharmacy.

4 Crush or split pills only when cleared. If you're tempted to crush or split pills for any reason, wait. Doing so may alter a medication's effectiveness. Never crush or split pills unless your health care provider says it's OK.



(continued on next page)

DR. ZORBA'S LONGEVITY CORNER

DOUBLE UP FOR MIGRAINE RELIEF Although newer migraine medications are effective, some migraine sufferers may still experience disabling symptoms such as pain, nausea, vomiting and sensitivity to light and sound. New research now shows that two medications may be better than one. Patients who took a triptan (a prescription medication that works to constrict blood vessels and interrupt pain) and naproxen (an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory) did better than those who took either drug alone. It's worth discussing with your health care provider if you suffer from migraines.

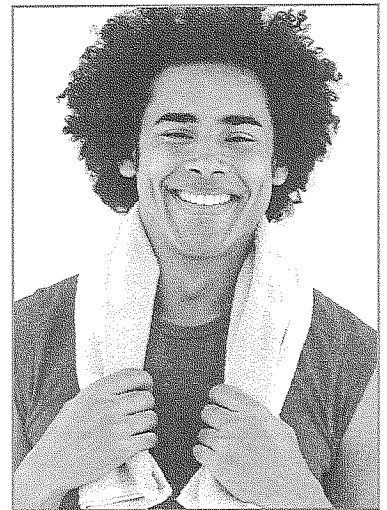
EXERCISE MYTHS E•X•P•O•S•E•D

There are a lot of misconceptions about working out, including those that might convince you it's not worth the bother.

Here's the truth behind the Big 3 Exercise Myths:

● **NO PAIN, NO GAIN** No way! Exercising to the point of pain may lead to injury and do more harm than good. Allow your body to gradually adapt to the added demands of your workout. Moving at a pace that's comfortable for your heart, lungs and muscles will improve their functioning.

(continued on next page)



When Someone You Know Has Cancer

How do you help when someone you know has been diagnosed with cancer? What should you say or do? *The following advice from the American Cancer Society may help:*

♥ **Speak from the heart.** Simply showing interest or concern is fine; the main point is to be sincere. "I'm not sure what to say, but I want you to know that I care" is a perfectly appropriate sentiment. Others: "I'm sorry to hear you're going through this," "I'll keep you in my thoughts" or simply "How are you doing?"

“**Say something nice.** When the person is looking good, say so. On the flip side, don't point out the person's obvious signs of fatigue or weight loss. Cancer is a hard disease to fight, and patients have good days and bad.

♦ **Don't advise.** Cancer can be unpredictable. Avoid telling the person that you know how he or she feels. When encouraging optimism, be sensitive to hardships so you don't discount the person's own fears and sad feelings, which are perfectly natural.

Research shows that people with strong social networks handle major illnesses better. So reach out if someone you know has cancer. It's the healthy thing to do.



Teach Your Children Wellness

One in three kids today is out of shape. Many of them are overweight and under-exercised. The good news is that every adult can teach kids to live healthier, more active lives. *Here's how:*

SET a good example. Let kids catch you in the act. Take stairs instead of elevators, walk instead of driving for short errands and dig into chores with gusto. Reach for fruits or nuts at snack time. Don't be a couch potato.

PUSH the positive. Reposition health and fitness as feel-good habits rather than work. Talk about how much more energy you have because you exercise or how much better you feel after eating fruits and vegetables.

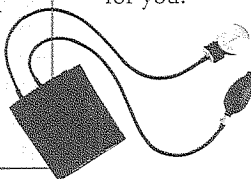
CONTROL screen time. Set specific time limits for watching TV, using the computer, and playing with video game systems and other electronic devices. As for video games, encourage those that include some physical activity.

FOLLOW their lead. Not every child is going to engage in sports. Help kids find other ways to add activity to their interests. If they love to draw, go on a nature hike with sketchbook in hand.

MAKE it a habit. Set aside time every day for physical activity, whether it's simply walking the dog or kicking the soccer ball around. Have fresh, cool water on hand instead of sugary drinks.

When it comes to kids, there is opportunity in every moment to reinforce lifelong lessons.

TALK ABOUT PRESSURE New data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that most people with high blood pressure are doing something about it — but that less than a third have it under control. If you have high blood pressure, talk to your health care provider to make sure you're doing everything you can, including weight control, exercise and modified salt and alcohol consumption.



The TLC Diet

If you're worried about heart disease, check out the Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes (TLC) diet. Originally designed for people with high cholesterol, heart disease or significant risk factors for heart disease, the TLC diet differs from other diets by calling for lower levels of saturated fat and dietary cholesterol. *Aim for:*

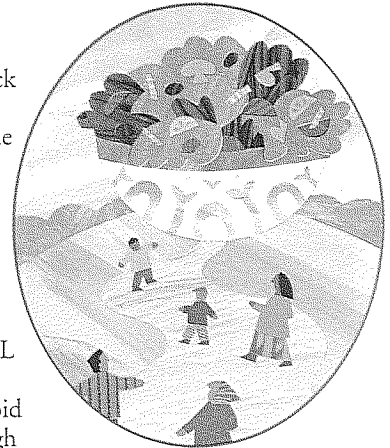
■ **Less than 7 percent of calories from saturated fat.** Saturated fat raises your LDL (bad) cholesterol more than anything else you eat. Choose plant-based foods and avoid products whose labels show trans fat or high amounts of saturated fat (more than 3 grams per serving).

■ **25-35 percent or less of calories from fat.** Any fat is high in calories, and a diet high in fat tends to be high in saturated fat and cholesterol as well.

■ **Less than 200 mg of dietary cholesterol a day.** To lower your dietary cholesterol, choose plenty of high-fiber fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Other options: nonfat dairy, lean cuts of meat, skinless poultry and fish. Pay attention to the cholesterol content listed per serving on food labels.

■ **Sodium intake limited to 2,400 mg a day.** Many people with high cholesterol tend to have high blood pressure too. A low-sodium diet can help control blood pressure. Choose fewer processed foods and avoid salty snacks; use herbs, lemon juice and other seasonings instead of salt at the table.

■ **Just enough calories to reach or maintain a healthy weight.** Losing weight — even a little — can help improve cholesterol and blood pressure. Talk to your health care provider about what is a reasonable calorie level for you. You'll be on your way to a heart-healthier life overall.



Medicine ... (cont'd)

5 Complete the regimen.

It's important to finish a prescription according to the schedule your provider prescribed. Doing otherwise can result in a relapse of your condition or produce an unwanted side effect.

Finally, make sure when you leave your provider's office that you understand why you're taking the drug and how it's meant to help. That's the best way to know whether it's working for you.

EXERCISE ... (continued)

● **IT MAKES YOU TIRED** Quite the opposite. In fact, researchers recently analyzed 70 studies and concluded that rather than making you tired, regular exercise actually makes you feel more energetic. But if you tend to feel exhausted after exercising, your activity may be too strenuous. Try easing up a bit.

● **IT REQUIRES A LOT OF TIME** Any amount of regular exercise will help improve your overall health, even if it totals just 30 minutes a day. So fit in a short jog, ride your bike or rake leaves. It all adds up to real benefits.

So what are you waiting for? Grab a friend and get going. You'll look and feel better. And that's the truth.

"The end is nothing; the road is all." — Willa Cather

NEXT MONTH: Eat to Beat Stress