



September 2016



September: Suicide Prevention Month

When it comes to our personal wellbeing, we cannot be healthy if we are mentally unhealthy. Today, one in five people struggles with a mental illness. As the third leading cause of death among young people, suicide is often the result of mental health conditions that affect people when they are most vulnerable. However, with the right treatment, people who suffer from mental illness can learn to manage the stresses of life, work productively, and make meaningful contributions to society.

This month, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) aims to raise awareness and promotes resources about suicide prevention. These issues are important all year round, but NAMI highlights them this month to encourage people to come together for honest discussions about mental health conditions and suicide in our communities.

For more information, visit www.nami.org.

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Regular Exercise Has Benefits at Every Age

We hear it all the time: exercise and a healthy diet are critical elements for optimum health and longevity. But how much exercise do you really need? The recommendations can be confusing. As part of its challenge to help individuals commit to regular physical activity and healthy eating, [Let's Move!](#), a comprehensive initiative launched by First Lady Michelle Obama, is geared toward people of all ages who want to set themselves on the road to a healthier life through positive changes to physical activity and eating behaviors. Let's Move recommends:

Age	Activity Minutes	Frequency
Kids and Teens <i>Anyone between 6-17 years</i>	60 minutes a day OR 11,000 – 13,000 steps per day	5 days a week
Adults <i>Anyone 18 and older</i>	30 minutes a day OR 8,500 steps per day	5 days a week

A new report from researchers at the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation also touts the long-term benefits of getting plenty of exercise. According to an article in HealthDay News, people with high levels of weekly physical activity had a lower risk of breast cancer, colon cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

To stay physically active as you age, consider activities like yoga, climbing stairs, vacuuming, gardening, running, walking or cycling. In addition, ballroom dancing has not only shown to enhance quality of life, but may lower the risk of cognitive decline.

September Health Observances

[National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month](#)

[Suicide Prevention Month](#)

[Healthy Aging Month](#)

[National Cholesterol Education Month](#)

[National Childhood Obesity Awareness](#)

[National Ballroom Dance Week
 Sept. 16-25](#)

[National Yoga Month](#)



Tips for Reducing Your Cholesterol



For many of us, the onset of fall means health fairs and biometric screenings. These events typically include cholesterol screenings as an indicator of heart health. Why? Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance your body needs, but when you have too much in your blood, it can form blockages in your arteries. Over time, high LDL “bad” cholesterol can lead to heart disease, heart attack and stroke. High cholesterol does not have symptoms, so many people don’t know if they are at risk for heart disease without screening. That’s why the National Cholesterol Education Program recommends that adults aged 20 years or older have their cholesterol checked every five years.



While heredity can play a part in how much cholesterol your body makes, you do have some control. Following these guidelines can help you keep your cholesterol at a healthy level.

Eat a Healthy Diet – Eating polyunsaturated fats and fiber can help lower cholesterol. Avoid saturated fats and trans fats, which can raise cholesterol levels.

Maintain a Healthy Weight — Losing weight may help lower your triglyceride levels and raise your HDL.

Exercise Regularly— Regular exercise can lower LDL cholesterol somewhat and raise HDL cholesterol. You should try to be physically active for 30 minutes on most days.

Don’t Smoke – If you smoke, quit as soon as possible.

Sources: Cleveland Clinic, Centers for Disease Control

How to Get a Day’s Worth of Fruits AND Veggies



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture



It’s easy for most of us to get enough fruit in our diets. Add bananas, berries, or dried fruit to breakfast cereal, slice a juicy melon for dessert, and crunch on an apple for a quick snack and you’ll probably meet the daily nutritional guidelines of two cups. Getting enough vegetables can be more challenging, however. Here are some easy ways to work the recommended 2½ cups into your daily menu:

- Start the day with ½ cup of vegetable juice.
- Enjoy a spinach salad or other main dish salad for lunch.
- Add vegetables instead of meat to pasta dishes, pizzas, soups and stews.
- Spoon salsa onto a baked potato.
- Keep bags of pre-cut, pre-washed carrots, snap peas and cherry tomatoes on hand for quick snacking.
- Make a vegetable stir-fry with small amounts of chicken, lean beef or fish.
- Whip up some refreshing fruit and vegetable smoothies.



“The part can never be well unless the whole is well.”

~Plato