

JUNE 2010

HEALTH NOTES

Fitness Fun in the Sun

Summer's long, sunny days inspire the athlete in all of us. Now's the time to enjoy some fresh air and exercise.

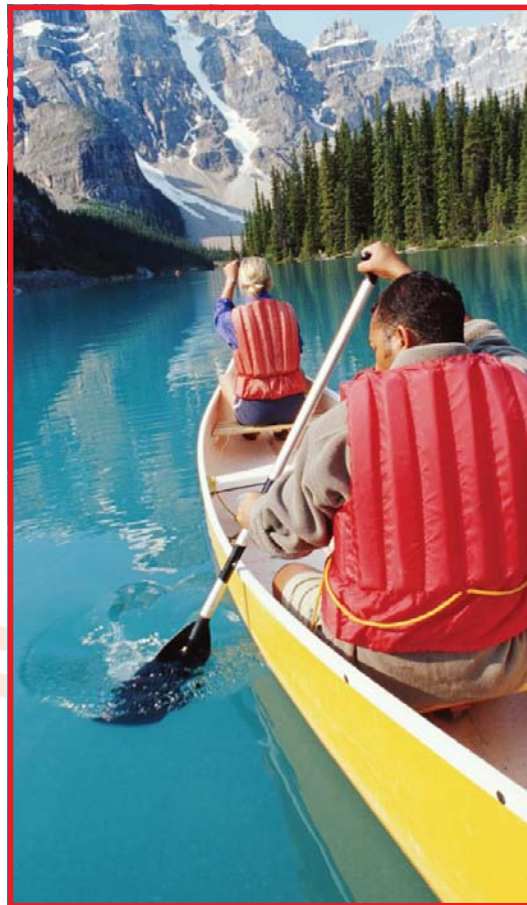
Walk out your front door to get reacquainted with nature and your neighbourhood. Walking provides benefits similar to jogging, but with less impact. *Tip:* Track your distance with a pedometer.

Step off the treadmill, go outside and hit the pavement. **Fast-paced walking** provides an all-over body workout. It tones your arm and leg muscles, burns calories and fat, and strengthens bones. *Tip:* Using your arms as you walk will burn more calories.

Take a leisurely roll on skates around your favourite park, or pick up the pace for a cardio workout. **Skating** strengthens your inner and outer thighs and buttocks, improves balance and is very fun. *Tip:* Don't forget the helmet.

Race the wind on a bike. **Cycling** conditions your heart and lungs and strengthens your leg muscles. *Tip:* Save on gas by biking to work a couple of times a week.

Whether you **swim** laps in a pool or play in a lake, aquatic activity refreshes



you in the summer heat. The water's resistance can help tone your whole body. *Tip:* Never swim alone, no matter how experienced you are.

Need a change of scenery? Try visiting different parks in your area. You might be surprised at how many exist within a few kilometres of your home.

Note: Get your health care provider's okay before *significantly* changing your level of physical activity. Stay hydrated and wear sunscreen.

◆ **Plump, juicy strawberries are a welcome addition to summer!** Choose strawberries that are shiny, bright red, and firm with unwilted green caps. Store in the refrigerator for 1 to 3 days; wash just before eating. Strawberries are high in fibre, vitamin C and folate and lack fat, sodium and cholesterol.

◆ **You may say no to "super-sized" restaurant meals to avoid weight gain** - but what about home-cooked chow? A study published last year in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* showed calories per serving in a popular cookbook have risen sharply in the past 70 years. This is a result of higher-calorie recipe ingredients (butter, sugar, more meat, etc.) and bigger portion sizes. *The scoop:* Select recipes that list nutritional and calorie information, or serve smaller serving sizes than indicated. *Tip:* Use smaller plates and bowls.

◆ **Medication mistakes happen.** Be alert to a possible mix-up with your prescription if you notice differences in any of these: appearance of tablet - size, colour, markings • the number of pills • the dosage size • the instructions • the medication name • the prescribing physician's name • or the reason for using the medication.

◆ **Warm up to settle down.** Taking a hot bath or shower 90 minutes before bed can help you get to sleep. As your body temperature drops, you'll start to feel sleepy.

Summer Weight Busters

Nothing says summer like backyard barbecues and picnics. But watch those calories! Love the tastes of summer and keep your weight in check with these easy strategies:

Grilling is great for many kinds of light, healthy fare:

High-protein options include chicken, fish and lean (loin) cuts of pork and beef. Do kebabs – they're so easy and quick – just skewer chunks of vegetables and shrimp for a “one-dish” meal. Use plenty of spices and go easy on the oil.

It's salad season:

Time to experiment with fresh garden produce from your backyard or local farmers' markets; add tuna, beans, boiled eggs, tofu or nuts. Use light vinaigrettes or nonfat sour cream dressing flavoured with fresh herbs.



Beverage check: The calories in soft drinks, beer and wine add up fast. A smart choice is sparkling water with a citrus wedge. Carry a water bottle to stay hydrated and satisfy your thirst.

For dessert: Chill with low fat frozen sorbet, fruit bars, or yogurt topped with fresh fruit. How about light angel-food cake with berries?

Can't resist a steak or peach pie? It's okay to indulge occasionally. And stay active with outdoor chores, sports and fun activities to control your weight.



HIKE on the WILD SIDE

Hiking in the wilderness is a great way to get fresh air and exercise. With some planning, you and your trail buddies can combine fun with fitness.

Find local hiking trails in a guidebook or online. You'll learn the terrain, scenery, trail length, level of difficulty and locations of trails and trailheads.

If you're a beginner, start gradually. Try hikes that are short and a lower level of difficulty before hiking to higher elevations. Talk to your health care provider first if you are unaccustomed to exercise.

Dress the part. Wear a hat and layers that you can peel off as you warm up. Wear moisture-wicking socks to

keep your feet dry and blister-free. Slip on hiking shoes, which offer ankle support and a shield for splashing around in puddles or streams.

Carry essentials in your backpack, including: a flashlight; water bottle; a compass; a small first aid kit; and light-weight, non-perishable food.

Rev up your hike. Carry a backpack. Need another challenge? Include inclines and switchbacks in your trek. Or: Hiking poles support the arms and legs and increase the energy you expend.

Note: Give family or friends your route and schedule before you leave. Happy trails!

QUIKQUIZ: Think Before You Click

The Web brings us an online world of fun, knowledge and convenience. But it pays to play it safe. Test your knowledge of cyber security:



1. Phishing is a popular online game.

True False

2. Which method is the one foolproof way to protect against hackers?

- a. Installing a firewall
- b. Periodically updating security and anti-virus software
- c. Disconnecting from the Web when you're done surfing
- d. None of the above

3. A secure website's address starts with "https://".

True False

ANSWERS

1. *False.* Phishing is used to get personal information such as account numbers and passwords. The pop-up or email may use logos and language from a legitimate bank, retailer or government agency and threaten dire consequences if you don't “update” or “validate” your account information.
2. *c.* While a firewall and security software are vital to computer security, they aren't perfect. Hackers can't access your computer when it's disconnected from the Internet.
3. *True.* Secure sites also show an unbroken key or a locked padlock at the bottom of the screen. Reputable online retailers also provide information about shipping, returns and methods to contact customer service.

Garden Well Without the Sneezes

Working in the garden can be a joy – unless it triggers allergies. The good news is you can reduce your allergic reactions by following some easy guidelines:

Avoid plants that release billions of pollen particles into the air. While you can't stop pollen from blowing into your space, you can plant flora that depend on insects for pollination. These plants tend to have heavier pollen grains that don't travel far.

Choose allergy-friendly plants – talk to your local horticulturist or visit a nursery for advice. Diversify your garden – don't plant too much of any one thing.

Wear gloves, a hat and a long-sleeved shirt (and breathing mask if necessary) while gardening.

Change your clothes and shower when you go indoors.

Limit gardening to cool or cloudy days and in the late afternoon or evening when pollen counts are lower.

Have someone else mow the grass and keep your windows closed at the time. Keep grass low (about 2 inches or 5 centimetres) to prevent pollen from becoming airborne.

Consider using gravel, oyster shell or ground cover such as vinca instead of wood chips or mulch, which can promote mould growth.

Remove dying trees or shrubs to reduce mould and other allergens.

Follow these tips and you won't have to "throw in the trowel."

What's Holding You Back?

How's your productivity? If you're feeling stymied, consider these barriers to finishing your to-do list:

Procrastination. When you feel your focus slipping away from a task or you think "I can come back to this later," your best bet might be to push on. Concentrate on the accomplishment you'll get from finishing instead of the momentary satisfaction of putting it off. When you've finished, reward yourself with a break to get some fresh air, have a snack or listen to some music.

Indecision. Reviewing your options is important, but you're not accomplishing much until you make a decision and take action. Create a deadline for big decisions and set milestones along the way. Finally, plan to move forward with your choice. You'll never know if your decision was the right one until you act on it.

Negativity. A dark mood can make deadlines and problems seem insurmountable. Focus on the day's successes. When things do go wrong, remember – there are still things to feel good about. Find ways to move forward and salvage the rest of your day.

Watch for these "traps" and take back control of your work day.

QUIKRISK™

Sun Protection Factors

How do you keep your cool in the summer heat? Check your daily defences:

- I avoid outdoor work and exercise between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on hot days.
- I take frequent breaks from the sun if I must work or play in it.
- I cover up from the sun by wearing long sleeves and a hat to avoid burning or tanning.
- I watch for signs of heat illness (dizziness, headache, nausea or increased pulse).
- I drink fluids to avoid dehydration in the heat, especially during active periods.
- I never leave pets or people parked in a closed vehicle when it's hot.
- I liberally apply sunscreen during sun exposure year round, even on cloudy days.
- I use a water-resistant sunscreen, minimum SPF 30, to help block both UVA and UVB rays.
- I don't use tanning beds or sunbathe to get a tan.
- I know that any discolouration on my skin increases my risk for skin aging and cancer.

If you marked every box, congratulations! If you left a few unchecked, take steps to make sure you're doing everything you can to stay safe in the sun.



Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

phone: 800-871-9525
 fax: 205-437-3084
 e-mail: editor@personalbest.com
 website: www.personalbest.com

Editor: Susan Cottman

Assistant Editor: Kim Wake

Advisors: Marica Borovich-Law, MBA; John Brennan, MD, CCFP; Canada Safety Council; Leslie B. Hutchinson, PhD; Cara Rosenbloom, RD

Designer: Nicolai Petersen

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Making Sense of Food Claims

Most of us like to know what's in the food we eat. Package labels tell us a lot – but when it comes to health, food advertisers sometimes promise more than the product delivers. And with so much to digest, labels may seem confusing at first.

Fortunately, we have terms widely used and approved for food labels to help us make healthy choices.

Once you learn this basic vocabulary, you'll see how useful the information can be. *Key words include:*

Calorie free

Fewer than 5 calories per serving.

Fat free/sugar free

Less than 0.5 g of fat or sugar per serving.

Low fat

3 g or less of fat per serving.

Lean

Less than 10 g of fat and 4.5g saturated fat and 95 mg of cholesterol per 3-ounce serving.

Low in saturated fat

2 g or less of saturated fat and trans fat combined/serving and no more than 15% of calories from the sum of saturated and trans fat.

Low sodium

140 mg or less of sodium per serving.

Sodium free

Less than 5 mg of sodium per serving.



What about health claims?

Some food labels contain claims linking the potential benefit of a food or nutrient to reducing the risk of several health conditions.

Approved health claims are based on these food and health links:

- A diet high in potassium, but low in sodium: reduced risk of high blood pressure
- A diet low in (or free of) saturated and trans fats: reduced risk of heart disease
- A diet adequate in calcium and vitamin D, paired with regular physical activity: reduced risk of osteoporosis
- A diet rich in vegetables and fruits: reduced risk of some types of cancers

Avocado Wraps



- 2 semi-ripe avocados
- 3 tbsp/45ml salsa
- 2 tbsp/25ml fresh lime juice
- 2 tbsp/25ml red onion, minced
- 1 cup/250ml shredded red cabbage
- 1/2 cup/125ml grated carrot
- 1/4 cup/50ml low fat sour cream
- 1/4 cup/50ml fresh cilantro, chopped
- 4 10-inch/25-cm whole-wheat wraps, or tortillas

1. Peel and chop avocado; gently combine with salsa, lime juice and red onion.
2. In a separate bowl, mix cabbage and carrot with sour cream.
3. Spread a quarter of the avocado mixture on each wrap; add a layer of cabbage mixture to each.
4. Top each with cilantro. Roll up snugly. Cut the wraps in half to serve.

Nutrition Facts

MAKES 4 SERVINGS (wraps)

Amount Per Serving		Total Carbohydrate	
Calories 270		Total Fat 18.7g	Dietary Fibre 17.4g
Saturated Fat 2g		Cholesterol 10g	Sugars 4.4g
Sodium 401mg	Protein 11.5g		

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