

# healing foods

Imagine this: The next time your hay fever is acting up, you don't reach for the allergy medication. Instead, you head to your fridge for a slice of carrot cake to keep those symptoms at bay. While the idea of food as medicine might sound a bit far-fetched, it's the backbone of what Andrew Weil, MD, teaches. A Harvard-trained physician, director of the University of Arizona Program in Integrative Medicine, founder of the National Integrative Medicine Council in Tucson, Arizona, and the author of several best-selling books, including *Eating Well for Optimum Health: The Essential Guide to Bringing Health and Pleasure Back to Eating* (Quill), he is often described as a dietary detective of sorts. Tell him what ails you and he'll instantly rattle off a list of foods that will have you feeling better in no time.

If you peruse his website ([www.drweil.com](http://www.drweil.com)) you'll find countless testimonials from people who have experienced near-miraculous cures. "I had excruciating migraines," says one woman, "I tried everything, every doctor, every medication. After two months of following Dr. Weil's advice on food triggers [including giving up chocolate, cheddar cheese, and cured meats], I felt relief for the first time in my life."

Ever modest, Dr. Weil says a lot of what he prescribes is simply nutritional common sense. "I strongly believe that how we eat is an important determinant in how we feel and how we age," he says. "In addition to supplying the basic needs for calories and nutrients, an optimum diet should also reduce the risk of disease and fortify the body's defenses and intrinsic mechanisms of healing."

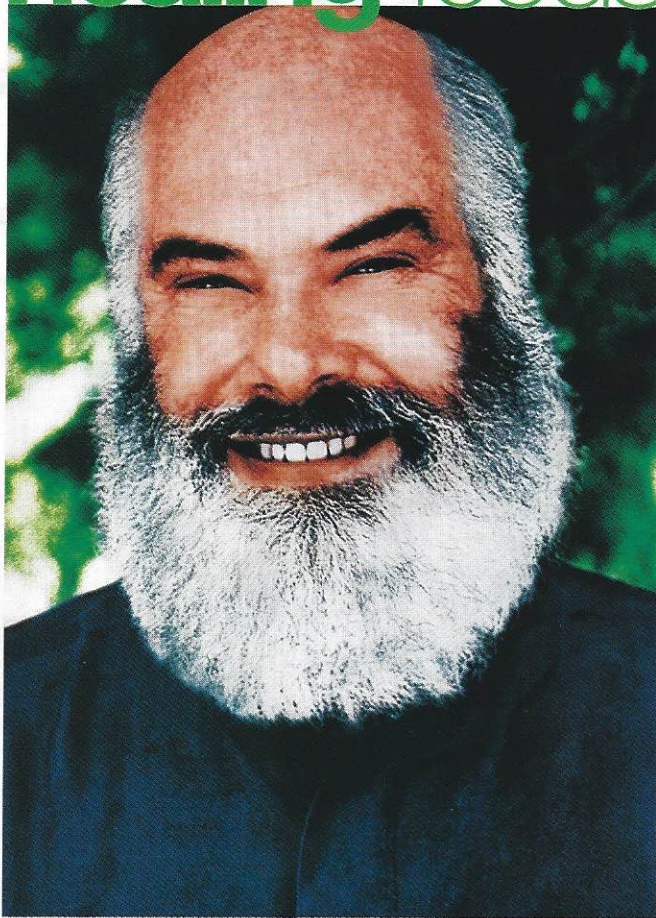
And he is quick to point out that his theories are not entirely original: "All the way back in the 5th century B.C., Hippocrates said, 'Let food be your medicine and medicine be your food.' Yet while doctors today might approve of Mom's chicken soup for a cold, they rarely think of the therapeutic benefits of what we eat."

Dr. Weil advises trying his treatments (below) for at least two months—and monitoring how your body reacts when you eliminate or add foods to your diet. He also cautions that you should always accompany these recommendations with dietary supplements, exercise, stress reduction, mind/body interactions, as well as conventional medical approaches recommended by your physician.

#### IF YOU SUFFER FROM ALLERGIES OR ASTHMA

##### Cut back on:

- Milk and all milk products, which can stimulate mucus production and restrict breathing. Substitute other calcium sources like collard greens, turnip greens, broccoli, spinach, kale, black beans, and almonds.
- Animal protein (specifically red meat). Reduce your intake to 10 percent of your daily calories, because, explains, Dr. Weil, excess



He dislikes diets and thinks that food should be both nutritious and delicious. In an exclusive interview, Dr. Andrew Weil shares how what you eat may be the key to your good health. By Sheryl Berk

protein can irritate the immune system. Replace with plant proteins, such as beans and soy.

##### Eat more:

- Organic fruits and vegetables—"in a rainbow of colors." They are free of pesticides, which weaken your immune system and make you less able to fight problems.
- Omega-3 fatty acids; these are found in salmon, mackerel, herring, sardines, hemp seeds, walnuts, flax seeds, and pumpkin seeds. They have anti-inflammatory properties that will help to counteract the inflammatory component in both asthma and allergies.
- Other anti-inflammatories like ginger and turmeric; all of the purple and blue fruits such as blueberries, red grapes, and raspberries.

**Why not try:** Fresh blueberries or even a slice of blueberry pie; grinding flax seeds and sprinkling them on cereal, a baked potato, or vegetables (they have a nice nutty taste); tossing a handful of pumpkin seeds or walnuts onto a salad.

#### IF YOUR CHOLESTEROL IS HIGH

##### Cut back on:

- Saturated fats and oils, like animal fat, butter fat, coconut oil, and palm oil; reduce it to no more than 5 percent of your total daily calories. Saturated fat is the main promoter of cholesterol synthesis in the body. (Also avoid refined carbohydrates, such as white bread, muffins, cakes, and pastries, which are often high in fat.)

##### Eat more:

- Soluble fiber, such as oat bran and fruits. They prevent the body from absorbing cholesterol.
- Garlic, hot red peppers, and shiitake mushrooms (these mushrooms have proven natural antiviral and immunity-boosting properties and are used nutritionally to fight viruses and regulate blood pressure). They help lower cholesterol.
- Omega-3 fatty acids, especially from fish. Dr. Weil believes that they protect against heart attacks, which are more likely with high cholesterol.
- Leafy greens (such as kale, spinach, and collards), fresh orange and yellow fruits and vegetables (tangerines and carrots) and red and purple fruits (such as berries and grapes). They are all antioxidants.
- Green tea (instead of coffee or soda). It's both an antioxidant and has been found to have specific cholesterol-lowering properties.
- Soy foods and legumes, which lower cholesterol and may also lower blood pressure. Dr. Weil says that soy milk now comes in delicious flavors, like chocolate and vanilla, and is also sold as frozen desserts (you'll love Tofutti's "ice cream" sandwiches).

**Why not try:** homemade oatmeal for breakfast or a small apple-oat bran muffin; tossing shiitake mushrooms with vegetables and chicken for a delicious stir-fry; a chocolate soy-milk shake; a garlic dip as a party-pleasing appetizer.

# Diflucan® 150-mg

(fluconazole tablet)



This summary contains important information about DIFLUCAN. It is not meant to take the place of your doctor's instructions. Read this information carefully before you take DIFLUCAN. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you do not understand any of this information or if you want to know more about DIFLUCAN.

## ► What Is DIFLUCAN?

DIFLUCAN is a pill prescribed by your doctor to treat vaginal yeast infections that are caused by a yeast called *Candida*. DIFLUCAN helps stop too much yeast from growing in the vagina so the yeast infection goes away. DIFLUCAN is different from other treatments for vaginal yeast infections because it is a tablet taken by mouth.

## ► What Is A Vaginal Yeast Infection?

It is normal for a certain amount of yeast to be found in the vagina. Sometimes too much yeast starts to grow in the vagina and this can cause a yeast infection. Vaginal yeast infections are common. About three out of every four adult women will have at least one vaginal yeast infection during their life.

Some medicines and medical conditions can increase your chance of getting a yeast infection. If you are pregnant, have diabetes, use birth control pills, or take antibiotics you may get yeast infections more often than other women. Personal hygiene and certain types of clothing may increase your chances of getting a yeast infection. Ask your doctor for tips on what you can do to help prevent vaginal yeast infections.

If you get a vaginal yeast infection, you may have any of the following symptoms:

- itching
- a burning feeling when you urinate
- redness
- a thick white vaginal discharge
- soreness
- that looks like cottage cheese

## ► What To Tell Your Doctor Before You Start DIFLUCAN

Only your doctor can decide if DIFLUCAN is right for you. Before you start DIFLUCAN, be sure to tell your doctor if you:

- are taking other prescription medicines, including any of the following:
  - diabetes medicines you take by mouth such as glyburide, tolbutamide, glipizide
  - blood thinners such as warfarin
  - tacrolimus
  - phenytoin
  - cyclosporine
  - rifampin or rifabutin
  - theophylline
  - astemizole
  - cisapride
- Since there are many brand names for these medicines, check with your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.
- are taking any over-the-counter medicines you can buy without a prescription, including natural/herbal remedies
- have ever had any liver problems
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or think you might be pregnant
- are breast-feeding
- have ever had an allergic reaction to any other medicines including those used to treat fungal infections
- are allergic to fluconazole or any of the ingredients in DIFLUCAN

## ► Who Should Not Take DIFLUCAN

To avoid a possible serious reaction, do NOT take DIFLUCAN if you are taking cisapride (*Propulsid*®) since it can cause changes in heartbeat in some people if taken with DIFLUCAN.

## ► DIFLUCAN And Other Medicines

Some medicines can affect how well DIFLUCAN works. Check with your doctor before starting any new medicines while on DIFLUCAN.

## ► How To Take DIFLUCAN

Take DIFLUCAN by mouth with or without food. DIFLUCAN can be taken at any time of the day.

The medicine keeps on working for several days to treat the infection. Generally the symptoms start to go away after 24 hours. However, it may take several days for your symptoms to go away completely. If there is no change in your symptoms after a few days, call your doctor.



**Just swallow one DIFLUCAN pill to treat your vaginal yeast infection.**

## ► Possible Side Effects

Like all medicines, DIFLUCAN may cause some side effects that are usually mild to moderate. The most common side effects are:

- headache
- diarrhea
- nausea or upset stomach
- dizziness
- stomach pain
- changes in the way food tastes

Allergic reactions to DIFLUCAN are rare, but they can be very serious if not treated right away by a doctor. If you cannot reach your doctor, go to the nearest hospital emergency room. Signs of an allergic reaction can include shortness of breath; coughing; wheezing; fever; chills; throbbing of the heart or ears; swelling of the eyelids, face, mouth, neck, or any other part of the body; or skin rash, hives, blisters or peeling of the skin.

DIFLUCAN has been associated with rare cases of liver damage. Call your doctor if your skin or eyes become yellow, your urine turns a darker color, your stools are light-colored, or if you vomit or feel like vomiting or develop severe itching of the skin.

DIFLUCAN may cause other less common side effects besides those listed here. If you develop any side effects that concern you, call your doctor. For a list of all side effects that have been reported, ask your doctor or pharmacist for the DIFLUCAN Professional Package Insert.

## ► What To Do For An Overdose

In case of an accidental overdose, call your doctor right away or go to the nearest emergency room.

## ► How To Store DIFLUCAN

Keep DIFLUCAN and all medicines out of the reach of children. If you need to store your DIFLUCAN, keep it in a dry place, in its original container, and at room temperature (59°-86° F or 15°-30° C).

## ► For More Information About DIFLUCAN

If you have any questions or want more information about DIFLUCAN, talk with your doctor or pharmacist. You can also visit the DIFLUCAN Internet site at [www.diflucan.com](http://www.diflucan.com).



**U.S. Pharmaceuticals**

## IF YOU HAVE A HEART CONDITION

### Cut back on:

- Animal foods and saturated fat, which can clog arteries. (You may want to consider a low-fat, vegetarian diet as part of a comprehensive, heart-healthy lifestyle program.)
- Polyunsaturated vegetable oils, margarine and vegetable shortening, all partially hydrogenated oils, all deep-fried foods, which can also restrict blood flow through the arteries.

### Eat more:

- Omega-3 fatty acids, especially eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) from fish and fortified eggs. According to Dr. Weil, Omega-3 acids have an anti-clotting effect.
  - Fresh fruits and vegetables for their antioxidant effects, which reduce the chance of heart attack.
  - Whole grains, nuts, and seeds for their fiber. Some studies indicate that fiber may also reduce heart attack risk by lowering blood pressure, improving sugar metabolism, and lowering cholesterol and triglycerides.
  - Soy foods, which protect the arteries.
  - Garlic, which has the ability to lower cholesterol, reduce blood clotting, and help lower high blood pressure.
  - Shiitake mushrooms, which contain eritadenine, a substance that helps the body absorb cholesterol and lower the amount circulating in the blood.
- Why not try:** a hearty pasta fagiolo soup, rich in beans, whole cloves of garlic, and vegetables; a spinach and mushroom egg-white omelet for Sunday brunch; salmon steaks hot off the grill.

## IF YOU'RE PLAGUED WITH PMS

### Cut back on:

- Polyunsaturated vegetable oils, margarine and vegetable shortening, all partially hydrogenated oils, all deep-fried foods. These promote inflammation.
- All caffeine, including coffee, tea, soda, and chocolate. All of these, says Dr. Weil, can worsen symptoms.

### Eat more:

- Omega-3 fatty acids, especially from fish, for their anti-clotting abilities (this eases menstrual flow).
- Hormone-free meats, poultry, and dairy products (look for organic labels). Hormone residue, says Dr. Weil, can aggravate PMS symptoms.
- Soy foods and drinks. They contain phytoestrogens, which are being studied for their ability to ease symptoms like hot flashes and irritability.

**Why not try:** soy milk in your breakfast cereal; miso soup (miso is a paste made from fermented soybeans and is full of antioxidants like vitamin E and antimutagenic) and salmon sashimi; a baked potato (loaded with vitamins C and B6, potassium, and fiber) topped with broccoli and a sprinkling of Parmesan. ■

TEST your SNACK PERSONALITY

# chew on this

Your favorite nosh is a clue to the real you.

If you are what you eat, your favorite munchies speak volumes about you. "Through our food preferences, we reveal our inner thoughts, feelings, and desires," says Alan R. Hirsch, MD, neurological director of the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation in Chicago and author of *What Flavor Is Your Personality?* (Source Books). In a recent study, Hirsch asked more than 18,000 people about their snacking habits. His findings: Respondents who chose chips tended to be overachievers, while people who nibbled on nuts were more easygoing. (The scientific explanation for this is that the olfactory and gustatory cortices, where taste and smell are processed, are part of the brain's limbic lobe, where personality characteristics localize.) So if you want a man who'll lavish you with gifts, don't date a popcorn popper: They tend to be penny-pinchers. Curious about what your cravings say about you? Read on. **By Sheryl Berk**



### If you chomp tortilla chips

You tend to be a perfectionist: Tortilla chip aficionados expect the best from themselves and those around them. They are punctual and responsible—and have little patience for people who aren't. Says Dr. Hirsch, these snackers would stand a good chance of winning on *Survivor*—they're prepared for any situation.

### If you prefer popcorn

You're a can-do person who knows how to take charge. These men and women have great self-confidence but never flaunt it. In fact, they tend to be conservative, especially when it comes to finances. So don't expect a man who munches popcorn to adorn you in diamonds—he'd rather save up a substantial nest egg for the future.



### If you have a passion for pretzels

Boredom is your worst enemy—these snackers quickly tire of routine. They look for challenges at home and at work, often biting off more than they can chew, and will toss out the old in favor of the new. Pretzel people make decisions based on emotions, not logic, which makes them vulnerable in the romance department.



### If you're a chocoholic

You're not alone. Studies cite chocolate as the most craved substance in North America. Part of its appeal is chemical: It contains amines, which stimulate "feel good" nerves (hence its reputation for being an aphrodisiac). In his study, Dr. Hirsch asked people to choose between a solid and a hollow chocolate Easter egg. If you go for hollow, you're impatient and a thrill seeker. Solid-egg eaters like to experience pleasure more slowly and tend to be content with the way things are. But this has a downside: Solid-chocolate fans may often settle for less than they're able to accomplish.

### If you're a cheese curl girl

You have high moral fiber and expect colleagues and family to be equally upstanding. This type makes a great boss: They'll always give you the benefit of the doubt and treat you with respect. While people may perceive them to be stuffy or rigid, in reality, they're just conscientious and organized.



### If you scream for ice cream

Your favorite flavor is a good reflection of your personality. Vanilla lovers tend to be impulsive, while those double chocolate chunk devotees like to be the center of attention. Chocolate chip choosers are competitive, butter pecan people are orderly, and banana cream pie fans are well-adjusted.



### If you dip into chips

You're a high achiever. Chip enthusiasts set a goal and let little stand in their way. No wonder life's little blips bug them—traffic jams and long lines drive them crazy. Someone who can't lay off the Lay's will never have the patience of a saint, but one thing's for sure: This type is a worthy adversary—in the bedroom and the boardroom. Just be prepared for serious game-playing.



### If you nosh on nuts

You're the peacekeeper in your relationships: always calm and even-keeled. Not even a screaming spouse, tantrum-throwing toddler, or bullying boss can ruffle this person's feathers—no wonder they do well in public relations. This type is so laid-back, in fact, that others may think they simply don't care. Not so—nut lovers just prefer to go with the flow.

PHOTOGRAPHS, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF FRITO-LAY; ENVISION (6)



# The Dirt on Pimples

You thought acne went bye-bye with your teen years, but a new crop of zits has suddenly shown up on your face, and it's more stubborn than ever. Don't worry, you're not alone—and clear skin may be just a few weeks away.

By Sheryl Berk

The scary fact is, as many as 80 percent of adults in their twenties and thirties suffer from acne, reports the American Academy of Dermatology. What's changed since adolescence: While teenage acne typically occurs on the face, adult acne, though it often crops up on the face, can also show up on the back, chest, neck, and shoulders. And because adult skin is drier than an adolescent's, when severe, your acne can take longer to heal and scar more easily.

So why are some of us still plagued with this embarrassing condition? Acne is a disorder of the oil glands that causes pores to clog with oil, bacteria, and dead cells, thereby producing blemishes. And what causes clogging is often hormones, which make oil glands enlarge and increase oil production (that's why some of us break out two to seven days before our periods). Stress, which increases hormones, may also aggravate acne, and oil-based cosmetics can clog pores, causing breakouts as well. Other triggers: Pregnancy and starting or stopping birth control pills (which affect hormones), as well as environmental irritants such as pollution or high humidity.

## Common Culprits

Suddenly started breaking out? Don't panic. There may be a simple solution to your pimple problem.

- **Improper cleansing.** Wash your skin regularly—once in the morning and once at night, agree doctors—with a mild cleanser, rinse thoroughly, and keep it moisturized with an oil-free, noncomedogenic (anticlogging) formula.
- **Oil-based cosmetics.** The oil can clog your pores. Look for oil-free products that are also noncomedogenic. However, note that even they cause acne in some people, so you might want to consider going makeup-free.
- **Sunscreens.** They often contain ingredients that block pores. Opt for ones with chemical-free sunblocks, like zinc. Oil-free, noncomedogenic moisturizers with an SPF of at least 15 are also a good option.
- **Oily hair.** Again, excess oil can clog pores. Shampoo at least once a day to keep greasiness to a minimum.
- **Hairstyling products.** They may contain chemicals that seep into pores, clogging them. Consider not using styling products at all.
- **Frequent irritation.** If you're seeing one particular area of your body affected by acne—that spot on your chin where you rest the phone or the place your bra rubs when you work out—investigate your routine and make some changes, like getting a speakerphone or a less abrasive bra.

## When It's Time to Call the Dermatologist

Acne's still not clearing up? Don't give up hope. There are lots of great medications out there—both over-the-counter and prescription. Our advice: Call your dermatologist and discuss your options. The doc may recommend over-the-counter lotions or

creams that contain Benzoyl Peroxide (which can reduce oil production), like Oxy-5 or Clearasil. Other acne fighters: pimple-fighting patches, on-the-spot gels, washes, foams, masks, and even makeup containing anti-acne ingredients.

## Prescription Power

When over-the-counter products don't do the trick, your doctor can prescribe one or more medications. Take topical retinoid creams, such as Retin-A or Avita, for instance. These Vitamin A derivatives unclog pores and allow other medications like antibiotics (see below) to penetrate the skin better. Azelaic (azelaic acid comes from a naturally occurring substance found in wheat) is another anti-acne cream that helps the skin renew itself more quickly and therefore reduces pimple and blackhead formation. It also helps kill the bacteria on the skin that causes acne.

Another effective course of action is an oral antibiotic, such as tetracycline or erythromycin, which treats moderate to severe acne by curbing its growth and decreasing inflammation. In cases where acne appears to be hormonally triggered, doctors may prescribe a low-dose estrogen birth control pill to combat flare-ups.

Ready for a full-out assault? Consider Accutane, a retinoid vitamin A derivative in pill form that works especially well on severe nodular or cystic acne (acne that is inflamed). "It's a miracle drug," attests Renée Jackson, from Newark, New Jersey, who in several months cleared up her painful red bumps. But with Accutane, there is the possibility of side effects, which range from muscle aches to birth defects in the developing fetus of a pregnant woman. Talk to your doctor and weigh the risks carefully.

Have an important work meeting or formal occasion planned? Dermatologists can also give you an instant acne fix: a cortisone shot injected directly into the base of a blemish. It will shrink it in three to five days.

## Homeopathic Remedies

For those who want to try an alternative route, visit a vitamin or health food store. They sell products containing tea tree oil, ester-C, vitamin E, and acne-fighting botanicals such as burdock root, red clover, and dandelion. But be careful, warns Robin Ashinoff, MD, chief of dermatological surgery and laser surgery at New York University Medical Center—many homeopathic remedies can cause serious reactions. Before taking them, talk to your dermatologist. ■

## Or is my "acne" something else?

You've probably seen those TV commercials about rosacea, a common, chronic skin disease that typically begins after age 30. In its earliest stages, it's characterized by redness, bumps, and/or pimples on the face, neck, or chest—but it's not your typical acne. As the disease progresses, the redness gets worse and small blood vessels may appear. In its most advanced stage, the nose may develop thickened skin that may appear red and bulbous (the actor W.C. Fields suffered from this condition). Though rosacea cannot be cured, there are prescription medications that can effectively treat and control this disease. Suspect you have it? See your doctor.

# Walk, Don't Run!

We offer this and other truths to dispel five notorious fitness fibs and help you distinguish fact from fiction when it comes to your workout.



BY SHERYL BERK

Will that ab cruncher you buy on TV deliver on its promise to make you look like Britney Spears? Can you really believe everything your personal trainer says? Not sure? Don't worry, you're not the only one. "Because they're so eager to get in shape, many people forget to do their fitness homework," says Michael Greenwood, Ph.D., a professor at the sport and exercise science department at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. "They may have the best intentions, but there's a great deal of misinformation out there, which not only decreases the effectiveness of their workout but also may jeopardize their health." So how do you separate the workout misconceptions from the realities? To get to the heart of the matter, we asked several experts to decipher the truth for us—and most importantly, show you how to make every minute of your fitness routine count.

## MYTH 1 "WALKING ISN'T AS GOOD AS RUNNING."

**THE TRUTH** The goal of all cardiovascular fitness is to reach your target heart rate, and you *can* get there by walking. "You can walk, cycle, or swim—they all will get you into that target zone," says Dr. Greenwood.

**WISE UP** Granted, a leisurely Sunday stroll is not going to get your heart pumping. "You may need to power walk to up the intensity of your workout," explains Dr. Greenwood. "That means swinging your arms, varying your terrain, adding two- to five-pound hand weights—even walking against the wind for resistance." To calculate your minimum target heart rate, use this formula: Multiply .6 by 220 minus your age. Take your pulse every five to ten minutes, preferably with a heart moni-

tor, which is more reliable than counting, and make sure it reaches your target heart-rate number and stays there for at least 15 minutes.

## MYTH 2 "NO PAIN, NO GAIN."

**THE TRUTH** You should challenge your body to the point of mild fatigue but never pain, according to Richard Krieder, Ph.D., director of the Exercise & Sport Nutrition Lab at the University of Memphis in Tennessee and president of the American Society of Exercise Physiologists. Straining yourself until your body hurts can lead to serious injury—not to mention make you want to throw in the towel, which does little good for your fitness motivation factor. Likewise, don't assume you have to be sopping wet after a workout. If you haven't exercised in a while, you'll most likely perspire less than avid exercisers anyway. Why? According to Dr. Krieder, sweating is a healthy process that rids the body of excess heat. The fitter you become, the better your body's thermal regulators become at cooling you down.

**WISE UP** When starting a new exercise regime, go slow and allow your body ample time to adjust. Over

time, the soreness will dissipate and your body will be able to handle the activity without as much discomfort. Also, make sure you

replenish fluids lost to sweat by drinking eight ounces of water for every two hours of exercise, before, during, and after your workout.

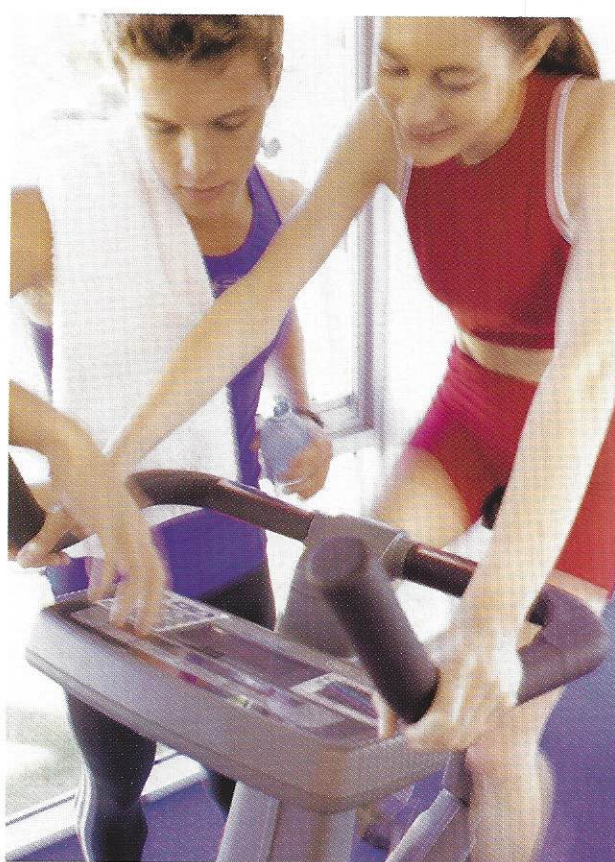
## MYTH 3 "IF I WORK OUT, I CAN EAT WHATEVER I WANT."

**THE TRUTH** Unfortunately, running two miles doesn't justify bingeing on an entire pint of Ben & Jerry's. "It's simple: To lose weight, you need to expend more calories than you consume," says Meg Jordan, Ph.D., director of integrative practice at the Health Medicine Institute in Walnut Creek, California. In fact, to lose one pound of fat, you need to burn 3,500 calories more than you consume. So if you burn 250 calories running on the treadmill—then eat a 300-calorie candy bar—you simply won't reach that deficit.

**WISE UP** Opt for a diet rich in lean protein, complex carbs, and lots of fruits and veggies that complements, rather than competes with, your fitness regime.

## new&noteworthy

Pick up your walk with some fresh tunes. Motion Music CDs and cassettes are designed to get you walking to the beat of three to four miles per hour based on your fitness level. Available in current hits, Latin pop, country, and more. Motion Music, \$12 to \$15. Available at [www.mywalkingmusic.com](http://www.mywalkingmusic.com).



## MYTH 4 "ALL I NEED TO DO TO HAVE FAB ABS IS SIT-UPS."

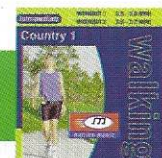
**THE TRUTH** According to Carol Krucoff, spokesperson for the American Council on Exercise and coauthor of *Healing Moves: How to Cure, Relieve and Prevent Common Ailments with Exercise* (Three Rivers Press, 2001), "there is no such thing as spot reduction, so no miracle machine or millions of crunches will give you washboard abs or remove inches from a specific body part. When you expend more calories than you consume, your body decides where it wants to reduce the fat stores based on your genetics and body type." And while exercises such as crunches and legs lifts improve the tone and the endurance of the muscles, unlike exercises that elevate your heart rate, they don't burn fat.

**WISE UP** Aim for aerobic activity that burns 250 to 500 calories (like bicycling or aerobics) four to six days a week.

## MYTH 5 "THE TRAINER KNOWS ALL."

**THE TRUTH** Not all trainers are created equal, says Krucoff. Their education and experience vary greatly. "Some only attend weekend workshops for their certifications while others have advanced degrees in physical education or exercise science or physiology," she adds. So know their credentials before you sign up for sessions.

**WISE UP** Tell your trainer about previous injuries or preexisting medical conditions, and let them know what your specific fitness goals are up front.



# the truth about colon cancer

You've probably heard that colon cancer is the third most common cancer among American women. But did you know full-figured women are at an even greater risk? Here's everything you need to know to protect yourself.

By Sheryl Berk

**It's not a death sentence.** It's preventable. But the reality is, if you're part of the group at risk for colon cancer and don't take the necessary precautionary measures, it's tantamount to shouting "Over here!" in the middle of a drive-by shooting.

While colon cancer is the third most common cancer among American women (after lung and breast cancer), a lot of us don't pay attention that far down the list. "Women go for mammograms and pap smears yet not for colonoscopies," laments Deborah Schrag, MD, MPH, an oncologist specializing in gastrointestinal cancer at New York's Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. "More than two-thirds of the deaths we see each year were probably preventable," she adds, estimating that if caught early, the cancer is more than 90 percent treatable and curable.

Still, more than 130,000 people will be diagnosed with the disease this year, and more than 56,000 will die of it, according to the American Cancer Society. And full-figured women are particularly at risk, studies show. The Harvard Report on Cancer Prevention found a 50 percent increase in colon cancer risk among women whose body weight exceeds the maximum desirable weight for height by 25 percent or more. Researchers now believe that obesity appears to influence the development of polyps as well as the progression of polyps to malignancy. If most of your extra pounds are around the middle, you should be super-alert: The study found that abdominal padding, in particular, seemed to promote tumor growth.

Heredity, too, is a major risk factor—you have a somewhat increased chance of developing colon cancer if you have a personal history of breast, ovarian, or uterine cancer, or a family history (first degree relatives: parents, siblings, children) of colorectal polyps. And African Americans have a greater predisposition to the disease.

There are also lifestyle factors that up your risk for colon cancer, but the good news is that they are in your control. Smoking and drinking, for starters—the time is well nigh to cut out the smoking, and even those who consume one drink a day have an increased risk of getting the disease. Love those steaks and burgers? Love those fries and shakes? Learn to love them less: A high intake of red meat and a high-fat diet that is low in fiber seem to be associated with colon cancer.

What's the best way to protect yourself? Most doctors agree that a colonoscopy is the most reliable and thorough test for colon cancer out there. Unfortunately, the procedure is not cheap—upwards of \$800, and not all private insurance covers it. Plus, it's no day at the beach. A snakelike tube is inserted through the rectum to view the colon. You're given a mild sedative (usually intravenously) to relieve discomfort and help you relax. To prepare, your bowel must be empty, so your doctor may prescribe a liquid preparation or possibly an enema that will cleanse the colon. You will also need to be on a liquid diet for one to two days prior

to the procedure. Sometimes a doctor will opt instead to do a less-invasive sigmoidoscopy (say, if you have a low risk of getting the disease). A tube similar to the one used in a colonoscopy is inserted through the rectum, but the difference is it's only pushed into the lower third of the colon rather than the whole thing. While you don't get sedated for this, you will need an enema to empty the bowels. Most patients say it's uncomfortable but not painful. A sigmoidoscopy is often done in conjunction with a digital rectal exam, where the doctor inserts a finger into the rectum to feel for anything abnormal. If you go this route, be forewarned: A sigmoidoscopy is a less reliable test. It doesn't reveal problems in the upper two-thirds of the colon. At the very least, you should have a stool sample tested annually for the presence of hidden blood (fecal occult blood test), one of the first symptoms of colon cancer. And remember, while none of these tests are exactly fun, they could save your life.

So do you need to schedule a test today? Maybe not. Here are the basic guidelines for when you should get tested:

- If you are 50 or older.
- Before age 50, if you have a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, inflammatory bowel disease, ovarian, endometrial, or breast cancer. A general guideline is 10 years before the youngest occurrence in your family (so if your mother was 48, you should be checked when you're 38).
- If you're experiencing any symptoms, including rectal bleeding, blood in your stool (bright red or very dark), frequent gas pains, fullness and/or cramps, diarrhea, constipation, or the feeling that the bowel does not empty completely, a change in bowel habits, weight loss with no known reason, or constant fatigue.

There are more preventative measures you can take. Talk to your doctor before doing any of the following:

- Take a multivitamin with at least 400 micrograms of folate daily. According to the National Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance, folic acid supplements, taken over a long period of time, may reduce your risk.
- Eat a diet rich in fiber, vegetables (particularly green leafy ones), and calcium. Studies show that these foods may protect against colorectal cancers by increasing stool bulk and decreasing transit time, minimizing contact between potential stool carcinogens and the colon.
- Consider taking an aspirin a day. Some data suggests that people who take aspirin over an extended period may have a lower likelihood of developing polyps and cancer.
- Consider hormone replacement therapy. If you are post-menopausal, studies show a promising link between hormone replacement and reduced colon cancer risk.

While the threat of cancer is frightening, there are steps you can take to keep out of the line of fire of this one. ■

# The healing power of yoga

THE RIGHT POSES CAN EASE STRESS, CALM CRAMPS AND EVEN HELP WITH HEADACHES

by Sheryl Berk

Yoga can do more than build lean, sexy muscles. It may also relieve PMS, reduce anxiety and even clear up a chest cold. "Yoga promotes relaxation, helping your body work more efficiently," says James Dillard, M.D., a professor of medicine at Columbia University.

Yogis have their own theories about how the discipline helps the body heal. "Yoga promotes blood flow and, through deep breathing, opens up those areas of the body that are prone to holding stress and tension," says Linda Sparrowe, coauthor of *The Woman's Book of Yoga and Health* (Shambhala Publications, 2002). Here's how yoga may help ease the following ailments:

## PMS/cramps

### YOGA Rx Reclining bound angle pose

Opening up your hips allows you to breathe deeply into the belly, relaxing your uterus and easing cramps.

**How to do it:** Sit with your back to a bolster or firm pillow. Bend your knees and bring the soles of your feet together in front of you. Place a strap or long sash behind your lower back and thread it around each ankle so you can pull your feet closer to you to deepen the stretch. Hold an end of the strap in each hand as you lean back onto the bolster; relax here for 5 to 10 minutes.

**Helpful hint:** If your lower back hurts, put a blanket under each thigh.

## Headache

### YOGA Rx Seated forward bend

Relaxing the upper body releases tension in the shoulders and neck.

**How to do it:** Sit on floor with legs extended, feet between a chair's front legs. Inhaling, lift torso from base of spine; exhaling, bend forward, resting forehead, cradled in arms, on seat. Stay here for at least 3 minutes.

**Helpful hint:** If you have tight hamstrings, add a pillow to chair seat.

## Chest cold

### YOGA Rx Legs-up-the-wall pose

Elevating your hips increases blood flow to the lungs, easing breathing.

**How to do it:** Lie down so your hips are flush with a wall and your legs are extended straight up and resting against it. Place a bolster or firm pillow under your hips and rest your arms out to the sides. Stay here and breathe deeply for 5 minutes.

**Helpful hint:** If you have tight hamstrings, scoot hips away from the wall.

## Indigestion/gas

### YOGA Rx Seated twist

Twisting poses improve circulation throughout the digestive tract by

squeezing and massaging the intestines, liver and spleen.

**How to do it:** Sit on floor with left knee bent and right leg extended, left foot on floor as close as possible to right inner thigh. Place left hand behind body. Turn your abdomen, ribs, chest, shoulders and head to the left while pressing the right elbow against left leg. Remain here for 10 to 20 seconds, then unwind, switch legs, and twist to the opposite side.

**Helpful hint:** Avoid doing this pose if you have diarrhea.

## Anxiety/stress

### YOGA Rx Downward-facing dog

This energizing move utilizes almost every muscle in your body, which diverts stressful thoughts and forces you to breathe deeply and concentrate on what you're doing.

**How to do it:** Begin on your hands and knees. Tuck toes under and raise the hips so your body makes an inverted V. Straighten your legs and arms, contract your quads, and draw your chest toward your thighs. Focus on pressing into the floor with the hands and feet. Lower your heels toward the floor. Remain here for at least 1 minute.

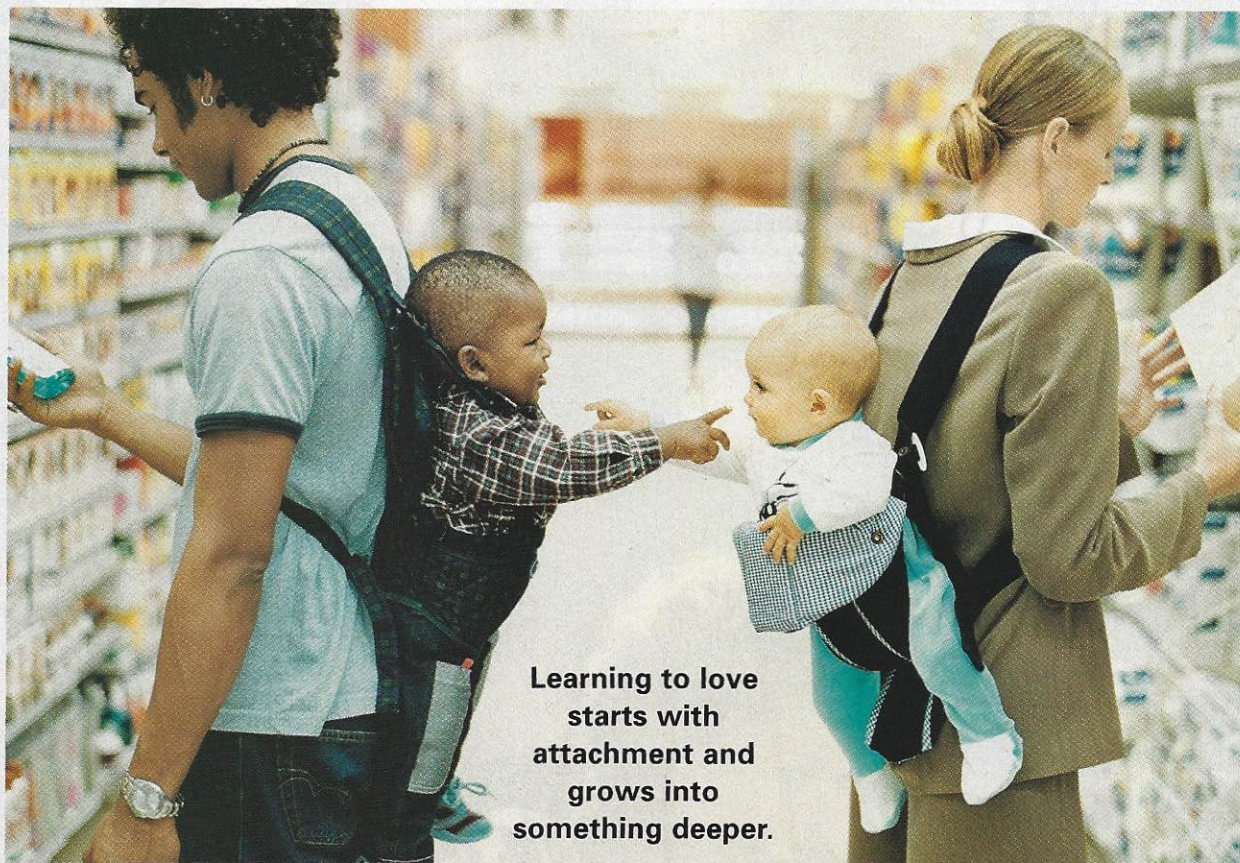
**Helpful hint:** Think of drawing your breath to any muscles that feel tense. ■



HELP RELIEVE INDIGESTION WITH THE SEATED TWIST POSE.

HAIR AND MAKEUP: STEPHEN RAMSEY FOR ARTISTS BY TIMOTHY PRIANO. MIAMI. MICHAEL STARS TANK. CHERRY PIE PANTS.





Learning to love starts with attachment and grows into something deeper.

## HELLO! I LOVE YOU!

One afternoon, 2½-year-old Emily came home from day care and made an important announcement: “Alexandra is my best friend.” Her mother, Nancy Saperstone, was surprised. “Up until that point, Emily just played with a lot of different children. She’d never really expressed a preference for one child over another,” says Saperstone, who lives in Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts. But in the weeks that followed, Alexandra was singled out as a favorite. “When I’d ask her what she wanted to do, she always wanted to play with Alexandra. They were inseparable,” Saperstone recalls.

Many parents are surprised when their little ones demonstrate strong feelings of affection—does a baby or toddler actually have the emotional skills to show such feelings? The answer is a resounding yes. Most children

form deep, loving bonds with their parents and friends from a very early age. “It starts way before a child can verbally express his or her likes and dislikes,” says Lawrence Cohen, PhD, author of *Playful Parenting* (Ballantine, 2001). “Even newborns feel attachment, from the moment they’re born.”

### In the Beginning

During their time in the womb, babies hear, feel, and even smell their mothers, so it’s not hard to believe that they’re attached right from birth. But as any adoptive parent will tell you, biology is only part of the love story. Young babies bond emotionally with people who give them regular care and affection. In fact, the first step in ensuring that your baby will bond with others is to attend to his needs in a timely fashion and let him know that

he’s loved. “Baby is dependent on her caregivers for everything from nourishment to safety, so this initial bond is very strong,” explains D’Arcy Lyness, PhD, a child psychologist and psychology editor for KidsHealth.org. “It also sets the standard for what baby expects in later relationships in terms of emotional security, trust, and predictability.” All of your loving care comes back when baby reaches or babbles to you.

We’ve all heard that imitation is a form of flattery. This is true for babies, too. In fact, imitation is a way in which babies show their preference for certain people over others. You’ll see that between 3 and 6 months of age, your baby will try to mimic your actions.

### Who Do You Love, Baby?

Before 8 months of age, baby’s signs of affection are rather subtle. That is,

until stranger and separation anxiety kick in. Hand your baby to a relative or babysitter—even someone he's met before—and he'll cry for you. As flattering as this may seem at first, it'll get tired if hysteria sets in every time you leave the room. Fortunately, separation anxiety will lessen over time, and the same tactics you've always employed to make sure your baby feels safe and secure—meeting his needs and show-



ing him love—will give him the security to explore relationships with others.

It's also around this time that babies start to demonstrate affection for peers, provided they've spent lots of time with other babies. The signs may be subtle: Your 9-month-old lights up when a friend comes over and is sad when he leaves. "You may also notice that as soon as baby can crawl, he'll go to one special friend," adds Cohen.

Around the 1-year mark, babies learn affectionate behaviors such as kissing. "It starts as an imitative behavior," says Lyness. "But as baby repeats these behaviors and sees that they bring happy responses from the people he's attached to, he becomes aware that

he's pleasing the people he loves." As a result, baby will use such behaviors more frequently.

### You Gotta Have Friends!

For lots of kids, toddlerhood is prime time for friendship. Toddlers have the memory to recall enjoyable experiences with others, can clearly demonstrate their affection for other kids verbally, and are beginning to understand empathy. Encourage your child to form friendships as a toddler: Studies show that the earlier kids learn to form positive relationships, the better they are at relating to others as teenagers and adults. "Playing with peers also helps young children practice pro-social behaviors, such as kindness, sharing, and cooperation," Lyness notes.

Even so, how quickly your child develops into a social creature may also depend on his temperament. "Some toddlers are very social,

## Toddlers show affection for children they like by imitating their friends' actions.

while others are shy," says Cohen. Sixteen-month-old

Sammy took her time warming up on play dates. "Up until recently, when I took Sammy on these outings, she'd cry if I was out of her sight for even a few seconds," says her mom, Marija Nadel of Teaneck, New Jersey. "Now she has more fun because she sees that she can enjoy herself with another kid—and that I'll always come back."

In addition, the way toddlers demonstrate that they like other children is markedly different from what adults think of as expressions of friendship. Research at Ohio State University in Columbus found that a toddler's way of saying "I like you" during play is likely to come in the form of mimicking a friend's behavior.

Such seemingly unusual ways of demonstrating affection can result in unpleasant behavior; after all, toddlers are still toddlers. Regardless of how much they like a playmate, they may still grab his toys, throw tantrums, refuse to share, and get bossy. Lisa Turney of Atlanta noticed her toddler, Alex, starting to speak up with his friends at age 2. "He'd tell them, 'Mine!' or 'Give me!'" she recalls.

But experts say that this is a normal and necessary part of friendship for kids this age. "Through play experiences, toddlers learn social rules," says Lyness. That's why it's so important to take an active role in your toddler's social encounters by setting limits and offering frequent reminders of what they are. When you establish these guidelines, explain the reasons behind them ("Hitting hurts. If you want a toy, ask for it nicely").

Begin by helping your child learn compassion ("Ben is crying. What's making him so sad? Maybe he wants the ball, and you have it now"), then suggest how to resolve the problem ("Maybe he would feel better if you

gave him a turn"). When your child shares or shows empathy toward a friend, praise him: "Ben stopped crying! You made him feel better."

Another way to encourage healthy social interaction is by encouraging kids to use words—not fists—to express how they feel. It's also important to be mindful of how your child's personality affects playtime. "Kids are cranky when they're sleepy or hungry," adds Lyness, "so schedule playtime when they're refreshed."

Regardless of how your child makes chums, one thing is certain: Friendships enrich our lives. Just ask Emily Saperstone. "Alexandra will be my best friend forever," she says. "Maybe more." \*

*Sheryl Berk is a writer in New York City.*