



APRIL 2022



THE Y AXIS



Are You Hangry?

You're stressed out.



You're tired. You're in a foul mood. And as the day wears on it gets worse. That ever happen?

You might not go to the doctor after having a bad day.

But if you did, there's a good chance the diagnosis would be "hangry," according to a recent study.⁵

Skip a meal and blood glucose levels drop. First, you're hungry. Then there's a spike in hormones linked to stress, anxiety, and depression.

Treatment: Take a break. Have a healthy snack. You'll feel better.

COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:

evan@thehealthycopywriter.com

Step Into Spring: Do THIS for 15 Minutes After Dinner

Walk daily to improve your health

When Colorado resident Meghan Rabbit started feeling like her wine-and-Netflix habit after dinner was taking a toll, she decided to make a change.

Her goal was simple. Take a 15-minute walk after dinner for 30 days.

Think you're too busy to fit a little exercise into your day?

Scratch the excuses. Most people can set aside 15 minutes for exercise. Step into spring to improve your health by taking a 15 minute walk after dinner (or another meal).

Research shows that taking a post-meal walk can help:¹

- Improve mood
- Control blood sugar levels
- Support digestion
- Lower blood pressure, and more...

Other benefits of walking include reduced food cravings, lower breast cancer risk, less joint pain, and a stronger immune system.

Make it a habit. It's only 15 minutes per day.

Take a walk around your neighborhood. Walk in the mall or big-box store. Go to the gym. Or dust off that treadmill and walk your way into spring to improve your health.

MORE

5 surprising benefits of walking
<https://tinyurl.com/ycqzxlvn>

Did You Get the Message? Texting While Driving is Dangerous

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Texas resident Chance Bothe knew texting while driving was dangerous. But he still did it driving to work, college classes, or on the way home. It didn't seem like a big deal.

And then it happened. He sent a text to a friend...

- Moments later his truck went off a bridge and crashed into a ravine.
- Just before his truck burst into flames, he was pulled from the wreckage.
- But he broke his neck, fractured his skull, and sustained serious brain injuries.

Put down the phone & drive

If you've ever sent a text while driving, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration wants you to know it's just as dangerous as driving blind.



In five seconds or less, your car can travel the length of a football field at highway speeds. And if you're not looking at the road, you could be in trouble. Just ask Bothe.

Every year, an estimated 3,100 people are killed, and nearly 400,000 injured because of distracted driving activities like texting.² But this is largely preventable.

3 ways to STOP texting while driving

1. Pull over. Need to send a text? Pull over and park your car in a safe place first.



Spinach and Mushroom Quesadillas

Hungry for some healthy quesadillas? Skip the restaurant or take-out menu. You can make your own with spinach, mushrooms, and a few other ingredients. Salsa and hot sauce optional. Here's the recipe:⁴

Ingredients

- 10 oz. spinach, chopped
- 2 C shredded cheese
- 2 T butter or olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- 2 sliced portobello mushroom caps
- 4 10-inch flour tortillas
- 1 T olive oil

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Place tortillas on flat baking sheet. Sprinkle with 1/2 C of cheese. Bake 5 minutes.
3. Heat butter or oil in a pan over medium heat. Stir in garlic and mushrooms. Cook 5 minutes. Add spinach. Cook another 5 minutes.
4. Spoon mixture on to tortillas. Fold tortillas in half.
5. Heat a little oil in skillet. Cook quesadilla for 3 minutes on each side.

Makes 16 servings.
154 calories per serving.

Aster Awards
HONORING EXCELLENCE IN HEALTHCARE ADVERTISING

Don't Cry: Onions are Packed with Health Benefits

Discover 8 health benefits of onion

Cut open the perfect onion, and the sulfuric compounds will bring tears to your eyes. But a few tears are worth the trouble to tap the vegetable's savory taste.

"It's hard to imagine civilization without onions," the late celebrity chef Julia Child once said.

That's because onions are a rich source of flavor used in a wide range of recipes and nearly every ethnic cuisine. You'll find onions in things like:

- Salsa
- Soups
- Salads
- Sauces
- Sandwiches
- Main dishes

Onions add a lot of flavor to the foods we enjoy. And they're healthy too. Onions are low in calories. They contain no sodium, fat or cholesterol. They're a good source of vitamin C, fiber and other nutrients, too.

8 reasons to eat more onions

Still not sure about eating more onions?

Research shows that flavonoids, found in the outer layers of an onion, may help:³

1. Reduce inflammation
2. Prevent heart disease
3. Lower blood pressure
4. Control blood sugar levels
5. Prevent age-related memory loss
6. Prevent digestive
7. Lower the risk for certain types of cancer
8. Improve bone health

Whether ordering out or cooking at home, use onions generously to flavor and season your favorite dishes.

Skip the deep-fried onion rings and other cooked-in-fat onion creations. Fresh onions – chopped, minced, thinly sliced, or cooked – are healthy for you and taste great.

Julia Child was right. It would be hard for most of us to imagine life without onions. After all, the average American eats about 20 pounds of onions a year.

MORE

Try these onion recipes
<https://tinyurl.com/yc3sm8e5>

Did You Get the Message? Texting While Driving is Dangerous (continued from page 1)

2. Choose a designated texter. If you're driving with someone else, have a passenger send text messages for you.

3. Eliminate the habit. Feel the need to click, swipe, tap and type while driving? Put your

phone in a place that's out of reach (like the trunk).

Note: Some newer cars will even disable your phone when driving. And that's a good thing.

MORE

How to prevent distracted driving
<https://tinyurl.com/4rx52wnk>

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Take the April Health Challenge!

Improve Balance: Practice balance movements to prevent falls and injuries

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question:
What can I do to sleep better?

Q. What can I do to sleep better?

A. Ever wake up feeling tired and groggy? Maybe you toss and turn all night. Maybe you have trouble falling asleep. Or maybe you've gotten into the habit of trying to get by on 4-6 hours of sleep per night.

You're not alone. About 1 in 3 adults don't get the recommended 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night.¹

If you're not getting a good night's sleep, it's important to do something about it. Why? Research shows lack of sleep can increase the risk for things like:²

- Obesity
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Mental health problems
- Accidents

5 Dreamy Tips to Help You Get Your Zzzs

If you want to get a better night's sleep, your doctor may be able to help. Sleep disorders and certain health conditions (like sleep apnea, depression, pain) can interfere with sleep. It's important to find out why you're not sleeping well to fix the problem.

For many people, getting a better night's sleep is a matter of lifestyle choices.

Healthy sleep habits like these can help you get your Zzzs. Here are 5 things you can do:

1. Create a bedtime routine

Go to bed at the same time every night, even on weekends. And wake up at the same time every morning.



5 DREAMY TIPS TO IMPROVE SLEEP

Create a routine that starts at least an hour before bedtime to help you fall asleep.³

2. Turn off electronics 1 to 2 hours before bed

Staring into a screen can keep your brain active when you're trying to go to sleep.

Research shows light from electronics like a smartphone, tablet, computer or other device disrupts sleep, even if you turn them off at bedtime.⁴

Bright lights can also keep you awake longer. So dim or turn off lights for a better night's sleep. Controlling noise and temperature can also help promote sleep.

3. Avoid caffeine and alcohol before bed

Drinking coffee, energy drinks, and soda with caffeine might give you a boost of energy. But drink them too late in the day, and you'll have trouble falling asleep later.

Alcohol might help you fall asleep, but you won't sleep soundly through the night. People who have a drink before bed typically wake up more often because of breathing problems like sleep apnea and to use the bathroom.⁵

4. Be active during the day

If you want to sleep better at night, get 30 minutes or more of physical activity each day.

Research shows that daily exercise helps people sleep better at night, and be more alert during the day.⁶

ASK THE *Wellness* DOCTOR

Fit exercise into your schedule at least a couple hours before going to bed.

5. Manage stress in healthy ways

If you're stressed out, you might find yourself staring at the ceiling when you should be sleeping.

Avoid dealing with stressful situations before bed. Save those problems for another day.

Counseling, relaxation techniques, healthy relationships, humor, journaling, and even a balanced diet can help you manage stress.

You deserve a good night's sleep. Create a bedtime routine and make smart lifestyle choices. You'll sleep better, have more energy, and be healthier.

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Improve Your Balance

CHALLENGE

Practice balance movements to prevent falls & injuries

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read "Improve Your Balance"
2. Practice balance movements and exercises to improve balance.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



Fall-Factor Quiz

How much do you know about the importance of balance? Take the quiz to find out:



T F

1. ☐ ☐ About 10 percent of all work-related injuries are caused by falls.
2. ☐ ☐ Reducing stress and distractions can help you be more aware of fall risks.
3. ☐ ☐ An estimated 1 million people a year end up in the hospital because of a fall.
4. ☐ ☐ Activities like tai chi can train your brain and your body to improve balance.
5. ☐ ☐ Strength and balance exercises can help prevent falls at any age.

How did you do? About 26 percent of work-related injuries are caused by slips, trips, and falls.² Every year, about 8 million people end up in the hospital because of a fall. Not all falls are preventable, but taking action to improve balance can reduce your risk for a fall or injury.

Answers: 1. False. 2. True. 3. False. 4. True. 5. True.

"I have fallen, and I can't get up." This made-for-TV-product catchphrase raised awareness about the risk of falls.

It also became an icon of pop culture spoofed in movies, TV shows, social media, and comic strips. But it really isn't a laughing matter.

You might think falling is just a problem old people have to worry about. But it's not. A lot of things could cause you to lose your balance and fall.

- Ever had a cat run under your feet walking down the stairs?
- Lose your balance on the soccer field or basketball court?
- Or slip and fall on a wet surface?

It happens a lot, and not just to the elderly. For example, 39-year-old Washington resident Lauren

Mayer says she tripped in New York City, fell and chipped a tooth, and even broke a toe while visiting her parents in California. Ouch!

Here's another one: At a gas station quickie mart in Ireland, a 32-year-old nurse tripped on a box and fractured her knee. It took a couple years and two surgeries to recover.

There's a million slip-and-fall videos on YouTube, and you can probably think of a few of your own viral-worthy off-balance moments.

When you lose your balance, trip, or fall, you can end up getting hurt. And while you can't always avoid a fall, exercises and movements to train your brain and your body can help.¹ Take the month-long health challenge to Improve Your Balance.

4 simple exercises to prevent falls
<https://tinyurl.com/5hffbkmw>



Regular Exercise Helps Improve Balance

Looking for ways to improve your balance?

Be more active. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate exercise per day.

Research shows exercise helps build stronger bones and muscles to improve balance and prevent injuries.⁴ Here are some things you can do:

- **Walk, bike, or climb stairs.** You'll strengthen your lower back. If you're just starting out, try a stationary bike or stair stepper.
- **Practice yoga and stretching.** You'll improve posture and balance. You'll also strengthen and stretch tight muscles.
- **Do tai chi.** It's a gentle form of martial arts. You'll learn to shift your weight and stay balanced as you move slowly into different positions.
- **Strength train.** Lift weights. Do bodyweight exercises like push-ups, planks, squats, and lunges. You'll build stronger bones and muscles. You'll also improve balance and the brain-body connection.

Video:
Improve balance
& stability in 8
minutes
<https://tinyurl.com/m6rejtfj>

5 Moves to Improve Balance at Home

In one recent study, people did balance exercises at home 3 days a week. They also walked at least 30 minutes twice a week.⁵

The results: People who followed the plan for 12 months reduced their risk for falls by 36 percent.

Want to improve your balance at home? Practice these 5 moves:

1 One-Legged Wonder

Take off your shoes. Stand on one leg, shoulders back, stare straight ahead. Look up from your line of sight about six inches.

Time: Balance for one minute, or as long as you can. Switch legs and repeat.

Modify: Try it with your eyes closed. Balance with one finger on the wall if you need to. Work up to balancing longer than a minute.

2 Tippy Toes to Heels

Take off your shoes. Stand up on your toes for 10 seconds. Then rock back on your heels (toes pointed up). Count to 10.

Time: 10 seconds toes, 10 seconds heels.

Modify: Increase time on toes and heels. Try it with your eyes closed. Balance with one finger on the wall if you need to. Or try walking around the house or the office like this. Heels, toes... heels, toes.

3 Bird-Dog Balance

Kneel down on the floor, palms down shoulder width-apart. Keep your neck and spine neutral. Look down. Lift your

Watch Your Step: 9 Factors That Increase Fall Risk

Nobody plans to lose their balance and fall. It just happens. One minute you're carrying groceries up the stairs. The next minute you're sprawled out on the ground.

You get in a hurry. Something catches you off balance. And you stumble your way to the ground.

You trip and fall playing a sport. Or you fall because you're totally distracted, like the Pennsylvania woman who was texting while walking in a mall. She tripped and fell headfirst into a fountain. Yes, this really happened.

So what puts you at risk for falling?³

Here are 9 common causes:

1. Weak muscles and bones
2. Poor mind-body connection
3. Excessive stress, distractions, and multi-tasking
4. Slick surfaces, or objects in your path
5. Slick shoes, or shoes that don't fit properly
6. Vision problems
7. Illness
8. Side effects of some medications
9. Too much alcohol



Benefits of
balance exercises
<https://tinyurl.com/vnw6t8n>

leg and hand off the floor and extend your arm parallel to the floor. Lift your right knee, and straighten your leg backwards until it's parallel to the floor. Repeat with opposite arm and leg.

Time: Hold the position for 10 seconds.

Modify: Work up to holding the position for a minute. Make it harder by balancing on your toes, instead of one knee.

4 Hula Hips

Stand up straight, legs together, shoulders back. Imagine keeping a hula hoop going in slow motion. Make a big circle with your hips to the left, without moving your shoulders. Switch sides. **Time:** 10 times per side

Modify: Try this in the pool. Or use an actual hula hoop. Increase repetitions per side over time.

5 One-Eyed Blinker

Stand up straight, legs together, shoulders back. Look straight ahead. Now close one eye. Pay attention to how your perception of balance changes. Repeat with the other eye.

Time: Start with 10 seconds per eye.

Modify: Work up to 30 seconds per eye or longer. Now try walking down the hall with one eye closed. Or practice this exercise sitting down first.

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**CHALLENGE**

Practice balance movements to prevent falls & injuries

Improve Your Balance

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, or add to your digital calendar).
2. Practice balance movements and exercises (daily if possible) to improve balance.
3. Use the calendar to record your actions and choices to improve your balance.
4. Review your progress at the end of each day, week, and at the end of the month. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH: _____							HC = Health Challenge™ ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	
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_____ Number of days this month I practiced balance movements

_____ Number of days this month I exercised at least 30 minutes

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____