

FAQS ABOUT VACCINES

Parents often wonder about their children's vaccinations. Why so many, and are they safe? To help ease your concerns, here are some answers.

Why are vaccines necessary? Vaccines are the best way to prevent diseases that can cause pneumonia, meningitis and other serious illnesses, and even death. The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends vaccinations against 13 diseases. (Individual provinces and territories set immunization schedules.)

Why are vaccines still needed for rare diseases? Immunization programs have reduced most of the contagious diseases – such as polio, diphtheria, measles, and whooping cough – to very low levels in Canada. But beyond our borders some diseases are still common, and travellers can be exposed to or bring these diseases into our country.

Do vaccines cause disease? No. They contain antigens, a weak form of a disease, which is just enough to prompt



the immune system to build antibodies that protect against invading germs. The body, even an infant's body, can handle tiny amounts of antigen; without it, the body may be too weak to fight the disease.

Do vaccines have side effects?

Like any medication, vaccines can cause side effects (slight fever, rash, or soreness at the injection site). Serious reactions are rare. Remember, not immunizing puts children at risk for contracting and spreading disease.

Any reasons not to vaccinate?

Children and adults with certain types of cancer or reduced immunity may need to avoid some vaccines. Review these and other concerns with your provider.

♦ **Heavy computer work an eyesore?** If you often have dry eyes, eye irritation, blurred vision and double vision following long screen sessions, here's help: ❶ Take frequent eye breaks. Look away from your computer screen every 10 minutes by focusing on a distant object for 10 seconds. ❷ Use a glare screen if your computer is near light that can't be controlled. ❸ Ask your optometrist about computer glasses that may reduce eye strain.

♦ **Getting help for depression and anxiety pays off.** According to the Canadian School of Public Health, people diagnosed with depression or anxiety who had not been treated with medication were 3 times more likely to be suffering from their mood disorder 10 years later, compared to those who had used medication. Researchers concluded that treatment protects against relapse.

♦ **Walking significantly lowers stroke risk in women.** Compared to women who didn't walk, risk for any type of stroke declined 30% in women who walked 2-plus hours a week and 37% in those who walked at a brisk pace (at least 3 mph). Protecting against hemorrhagic stroke (blood vessel rupture) was even greater: a 57% lower risk in those who walked 2-plus hours a week and 68% lower risk in those who walked briskly. *Walk on!*

Quick Course in 10-Minute Workouts

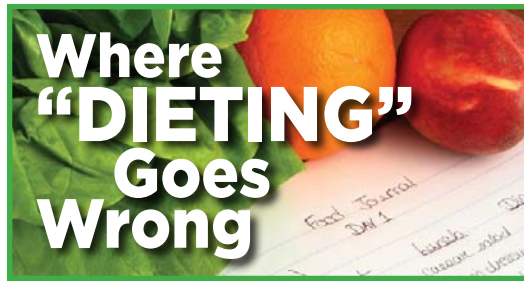
If you think you don't have time to exercise, breaking up your workout into 10-minute segments could be the ticket.

Some folks find a pattern of several short workouts is easier to stick to and simpler to fit into a schedule. Also, you can do short activity breaks nearly anywhere.

These workouts are flexible. You can do one activity for 10 minutes, or break it up into several 1- to 2-minute moderate-intensity segments. You should notice an increase in your pulse rate but still be able to talk comfortably. Try to include stretching, strength building and aerobic components: for example, you might combine jumping jacks and lifting small weights.

These short stints of exercise can also be incorporated into everyday regular activities. Take the stairs at work, walk for 10 minutes straight when shopping at the mall, or stretch during TV commercial breaks. Dancing, moderate housework and gardening also count. If you haven't exercised in a while, start with one 10-minute period of movement and work up to 3 or more per day. Consult your health care provider first if you have any medical problems.

Every minute counts. Over time, these quick exercise breaks add up to better physical fitness and greater health for you.



With all the bestselling diet books and weight loss products, you might expect Canadians to be experts in weight reduction. However, most people who go on crash diets eventually regain the weight (and sometimes more). So where do things go wrong?

- Many people go on *highly restrictive diets* but resume their old patterns when they can no longer stand the deprivation.
- Food is ever-present in our daily lives, making it easy to give in to *temptation*.
- Many give in to *“emotional eating”* to manage anxiety, depression and boredom.

■ People lack the *support* needed to help them maintain their weight loss goals.

So what's the formula for lasting success? Those who successfully maintain weight loss make lifestyle changes:

- They *exercise a lot*, walking on average 8,000 more steps a day than the average person. Diet AND exercise are needed for steady weight loss.
- They *favour healthy foods* such as fruits, vegetables, lean meats and complex carbohydrates. This eating plan is sustainable for the long term.
- They *monitor their progress* with frequent weigh-ins and food diaries.
- They find ways to *deal with stress* besides overeating and get treatment for depression or other conditions that get in the way.

The truth is that many people with a healthy weight have to work at it.

So don't get discouraged; just get started.

QUIKQUIZ: Anxiety Disorders

Many of us feel worried or anxious from time to time. But some people suffer high levels of anxiety that produce abnormal, frequent feelings of fear and nervousness. What makes the difference?

1. Unlike depression, anxiety disorders are somewhat rare.

True False

2. Typical anxiety disorder symptoms include:

- a. racing heartbeat, trembling or shortness of breath
- b. feeling numb or detached
- c. feeling guilty or worthless
- d. excessive fear of specific situations

3. Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is a form that makes relaxation impossible.

True False

4. People with anxiety disorders are likely to also suffer from depression.

True False

ANSWERS

1. *False*. Anxiety disorders are a common mental health problem. They affect 12% of Canadians annually, according to the Anxiety Disorders Association of Canada.
2. *a, b and d*. These are symptoms of 3 common anxiety disorders: panic disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, and social anxiety disorder.
3. *True*. If you have GAD you may worry about common problems – money, family or work. But your worries become exaggerated. For example, a co-worker's comment about the economy becomes a vision of an imminent pink slip.
4. *True*. Those with anxiety disorders may also abuse alcohol and other drugs to relieve their symptoms.

Remember: Anxiety disorders are highly treatable. Talk to your health care provider if you have symptoms.

MANAGING MULTIPLE MEDICINES

We now have more medications to help us than ever before. When taken together, however, some drugs may interact and lose their effectiveness or produce unhealthy side effects. Health care experts offer these important ways to stay safe with your medicines:

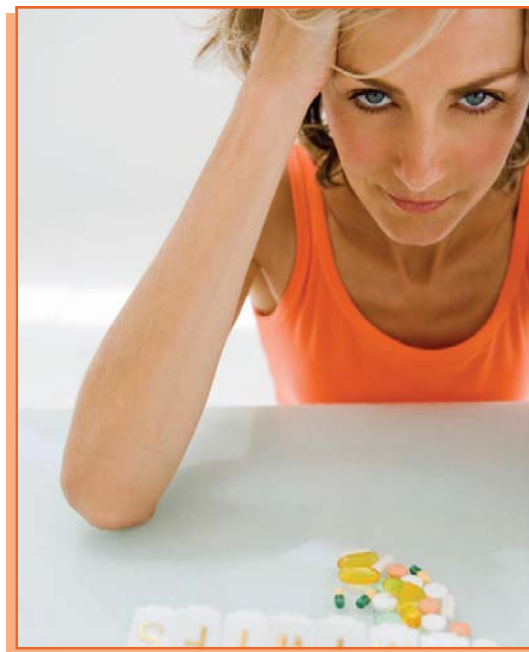
KNOW what your medicine is, its purpose and possible side effects.

KNOW when to take your medicine.

KNOW what to avoid when using it.

TELL every health care provider you see (physician, dentist, naturopath, etc.) what you're using, including over-the-counter (OTC) drugs, herbals and supplements.

KEEP a current written log of all medicines and supplements you use, including when and how much.



KNOW your pharmacist, who can answer questions about possible drug reactions when you pick up your prescription or OTC medications. *Tip:* Buy all your medicine at the same pharmacy, one that records prescription use for each customer.

Make this your standard procedure. After all, medicine is supposed to help, not harm, you.

MENINGITIS: Removing the Mystery

Meningitis is the inflammation of the membranes lining your brain and spinal cord. While it is relatively rare, people tend to fear meningitis because it can be deadly.

It's caused by several different viral or bacterial infections:

Viral meningitis can be caused by measles, mumps and chicken pox, or by viruses spread by mosquitoes and other biting insects. It may improve without treatment.

Bacterial meningitis can form in the brain from an ear, sinus or respiratory infection. It can quickly become life-threatening, or cause brain damage, so prompt treatment with antibiotics is important.

Classic symptoms include: sudden

high fever, severe headache or stiff neck, sleepiness and confusion.

Those most at risk: children under age 5, young people between ages 16 and 25, and those over age 55. Other risk factors include exposure during an outbreak; being in a community setting; travelling to or living where meningitis is common; pregnancy; and certain immune disorders.

To reduce your risk: Avoid anyone with an active infection. Wash your hands well, especially before eating or after being in a crowd.

Ask your health care provider about meningococcal vaccines for you and your children. The vaccine can prevent about 70% of cases.

QUIKRISK™  
Secure Your Home
Before you leave it alone.

A home break-in is the last thing you want to worry about during vacation. How many of these steps do you take before you leave home?

- I secure windows and doors. When possible, I reinforce them with an alarm system and dead-bolt locks.
- I trim shrubbery or trees that hide doors or windows.
- I have outdoor lights and motion detectors where they are hard to reach.
- I disguise my absence. I keep a car in the driveway, and put indoor lights and radios on timers. I arrange for mail and newspaper pickup and yard care.
- I keep valuables invisible from windows.
- I lock up and hide personal information to thwart identity thieves.
- I don't broadcast my absence to others in a voice mail greeting, email autoreply, on social websites or in ads.
- I don't put my home address on luggage.
- I have installed a burglar alarm that rings to an outside service.
- I have asked a neighbor or friend to park their car in my driveway and keep an eye on my home.

How many of the steps listed above have you taken to keep thieves out? If you're just getting started, look at your home the way burglars do. Identify the easiest entry and other problem areas, such as a high fence or ground-level windows.

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

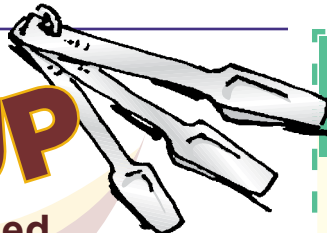
Advisors: Marica Borovich-Law, MBA; John Brennan, MD, CCFP; Canada Safety Council; Leslie B. Hutchinson, PhD; Cara Rosenbloom, RD

Designer: Nicolai Petersen

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SPICING IT UP



Spices are tasty additions to any cuisine. They help reduce salt, fat and sugar in cooking and baking.

Liven up your meals 6 easy ways:

- 1 Substitute a tablespoon or 15 ml of fresh spice for ¼ to ½ teaspoon or 1 ml to 2 ml dry.
- 2 Reduce sugar by using spices with a hint of “sweet” – cinnamon, ginger, clove, nutmeg or cardamom.
- 3 Replace salt with flavours that have “bite” – paprika, cayenne, cumin or curry.
- 4 In general use ¼ teaspoon or 1 ml of ground spice for every 4 servings, pound or 453 grams of meat, or pint or 475 ml of liquid. Use less for stronger flavourings such as cayenne pepper.
- 5 When making soup, try out new spice combinations by first adding ⅛ teaspoon to ½ cup or .5 ml to 125 ml of liquid; let stand for 10 minutes and taste. If you like the flavour, add the spices to the remainder of the recipe.
- 6 Check dried spices for freshness by crushing a small amount and sniffing it. The aroma should be fresh and pungent.

Have you tried these popular spices?

CINNAMON livens up many foods, especially pumpkin pie, apple dishes, cookies and spiced cider.



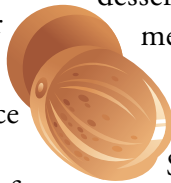
CLOVES are used in baked goods or to stud a ham. Try ground cloves with cranberries or sweet potatoes.



CUMIN complements beef, lamb, carrots and legumes.

GINGER is popular with Asian dishes and, of course, gingerbread.

NUTMEG adds a warm, sweet, nutty quality ideal for many foods, including desserts, pasta, poultry, ground meats, and vegetables such as squash.



PAPRIKA adds mild heat. Sprinkle on eggs, poultry, vegetables and soups.

TURMERIC enlivens rice, stew or lentils.

More than good taste: New research suggests plant substances in spices may help fight infection and inflammation, relieve nausea or delay cancer growth.

Summer Salad with Mint

- 2 cups/500ml green beans, trimmed
- 4 cups/1 L tomato, coarsely chopped
- 1 15-ounce can/425g cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup/250ml sweet onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp/25ml fresh mint, chopped
- 2 tbsp/25ml fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsp/25ml extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup/125ml crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese



1. Cook green beans in boiling water 10-12 minutes until fork-tender; drain and rinse with cold water.
2. In a large bowl gently combine green beans with tomato, cannellini beans, onion, mint, lemon juice and oil.
3. Top with cheese and serve.

Nutrition Facts

MAKES 7½ CUPS/1.77 LITRES (6 SERVINGS).

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 176	
Total Fat	6.6g
Saturated Fat	1.8g
Cholesterol	0.0g
Sodium	309mg
Total Carbohydrate	22g
Dietary Fibre	6.6g
Sugars	0.0g
Protein	9.2g

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