

APRIL 2011

## Skin Cancer: Avoid Overexposure

It's spring ... time to enjoy the great outdoors. And with the warmer days comes a reminder to shield yourself against the sun.

In addition to getting regular skin checks, there's a lot that you can do to protect yourself against cancer:

**Wear tightly-woven protective clothing** such as long-sleeved shirts, long pants, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses.

**Seek shade whenever possible.** Use extra caution between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Shade and hydration also help prevent heatstroke.

**Avoid tanning beds and sun lamps** — they can cause wrinkling and skin cancer. If you want to look sun-kissed, try a self-tanning product instead. Remember: Tanned skin is damaged skin.

**Check your skin regularly** — look for any spots that change shape, colour or size, persistent patches or sores that don't heal, or new growths. These may be signs of skin cancer, so report them to your health care provider right away.

**Take extra care around water, sand and snow** — they reflect the sun, increasing your chance of sunburn.



**Choose a sunscreen labelled "broad-spectrum"** — this helps protect against UVA and UVB rays. Generously apply to all exposed skin before going outside and every two hours thereafter, even on cloudy days and especially after sweating or swimming. *Note:* The sun protection factor (SPF) only indicates protection against UVB. Choose a product with SPF 30, which allows less UVB radiation (3 percent) to penetrate the skin than SPF 15 (7 percent).

**Body Bulletin takeaway →**  
Skin cancer is very treatable if caught early, so play it safe by following these protective measures.

## HEALTH NOTES

◆ **Kids—especially adolescents — need lots of sleep.** Teens tend to go to bed too late to get nine hours of sleep, which is what they need for optimal performance at school. A recent study found when the school start was delayed from 8 a.m. to 8:30 a.m., kids did better in school and reported better sleep. If you can't get school to start later, the next best thing is getting your teens to bed earlier. How? Shut off all electronics and switch to reading. Electronics are energizing and interfere with sleep onset, while reading is generally more calming. Tip: Collect keyboards and cell phones at a regular time each night so kids know it's time to disconnect. — Zorba Paster, MD

◆ **The results are in:** Liposuction removes body fat but doesn't trim the risk of heart disease or diabetes. Such risk reduction is better achieved by losing weight through diet and exercise. Liposuction removes fat below the skin but not the visceral fat around the organs. Visceral fat secretes inflammatory chemicals that negatively affect your heart and blood sugar control. Conventional weight loss shrinks fat cells, reducing the amount of these damaging substances and positively impacting your health.



## QUIKRISK™ ASSESSMENT:

### Alcohol

Are your drinking habits harmful? Take this quick quiz to find out.



#### YES OR NO

- Do you sometimes take a drink first thing in the morning to get going?
- Have you felt annoyed by others complaining about your drinking habits?
- Have you felt guilty about something you said or did while drinking?
- Do you lie about your drinking?
- Do you have "blackouts" or episodes of drinking you can't recall?
- Do you drink alone?
- Do you spend a lot of time thinking about drinking?
- Have you had problems (such as fights or tardiness at work) resulting from your drinking?
- Have you ever thought you should be drinking less?
- Do you ever drink and drive?

If you answered "yes" to two or more of these questions, consider talking to your health care provider about your drinking patterns.

# Stop Fighting Over Finances

In these tough economic times, you might find stress over money hitting close to home. When financial stress causes friction between you and your partner, take these steps to lessen the tension:

**Stay calm.** If you're feeling anxious, overtired or angry, reschedule your talk when you've calmed down.

**Share the burden.** Sit down together regularly to discuss your overall financial health, especially if one partner does the budgeting, bill paying and expense tracking.

**Stop the blame game.** Frustration about finances can lead to blaming each other for money problems. Step back and focus on solutions instead of mistakes.

## I Don't Smoke ... *How Can I Have Lung Cancer?*

People who have never lit a cigarette are often stunned when diagnosed with lung cancer. Their shock is understandable, given that smoking is the leading cause of lung cancer. But other factors can contribute to this disease:

**The invisible killer.** Radon is an odourless, colourless gas naturally found in soil and rock. Long-term exposure to residential radon causes about 10 percent of lung cancer deaths. It seeps into buildings through small gaps and cracks. Luckily, it's fairly easy to detect and fix — have a professional test for radon in your home and install a remediation system if needed. Health Canada recommends remediation if the average annual radon concentration exceeds 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> in areas used more than four hours a day, such as a family room or workshop.

**Hazard zone.** Exposure to asbestos, uranium, arsenic, cadmium, chromium,



**Make a plan.** Create a budget together that works for your finances. Make sure you agree on financial goals.

**Know your own issues.** If you argue about money frequently, take a closer look at your attitude toward it.

**Seek help.** If your money problems are serious or you can't communicate about them productively, speak with a trained financial counsellor.

April is National  
Cancer Month.



nickel and some petroleum products can add risk. Workers exposed to these materials should carefully follow company safety regulations and discuss concerns with supervisors or safety officers.

**Second-hand smoke.** Being around smokers can also contribute to lung cancer. Encourage family members and roommates to kick the habit.

**CT scans.** There appears to be evidence of increased risk from CT radiation. Overexposure probably affects a relatively small number of individuals, but be aware that CT radiation has a cumulative effect. Children are particularly susceptible.

**In the genes.** Lung cancer can run in families — if this applies to you, ask your health care provider how you can reduce your risk.

**It adds up** → These factors can interact to raise your risk, so eliminate as many of them as possible.

# Ways to Prevent Back Injury

**Back injuries continue to be a huge problem** in the workplace and at home. Follow these four tips to keep your back safe and sound:

**Exercise to keep fit and flexible.** Strengthening your core muscles (abdomen, trunk and back) helps you protect your spine and be less prone to back pain.

**Use correct posture** whether you're standing, sitting, walking or lifting. Use a lumbar pillow or a rolled-up towel for lower back strengthening and support if you must sit for long periods.

**Ask for help if an object is too heavy or awkward to carry.** If no one is available, wait until help arrives or use a hand truck. Avoid using a back belt — they don't prevent injury.

**Always be aware of your back and neck position** and avoid quick, jerky or extreme movements that can cause back injuries.



- ✓ Plant your feet firmly on the ground, keep heels on floor and stand as close to the load as possible.
- ✓ Squat and keep your knees back, your head higher than your tail and your rear travelling down and back up as you lift.
- ✓ Use your leg muscles (not your back) as you lift. Tighten and suck in your abdominal muscles, too.
- ✓ Avoid twisting and turning on the way up or down. Turn by moving your feet, not your shoulders.

**Good Lifting Techniques**

## EXPERT Advice

— Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP

### April is Irritable Bowel Syndrome Awareness Month.

**Q: Relief for IBS symptoms?**

**A: Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)** symptoms usually begin in young adulthood, and may wax and wane for life. The symptoms often include cramping, abdominal pain, diarrhea, constipation, gas and bloating. Unlike ulcerative colitis, bleeding and swelling from the intestinal tract usually aren't part of the condition.

If your symptoms suggest IBS, see your provider for an evaluation. Medications can ease symptoms, and new research suggests antibiotic treatment may help as well. **Self-care steps you can take include →**

**Get enough fibre.** Eat more fruits, vegetables and whole-grain cereals. To minimize gas and bloating, gradually increase high-fibre foods.

**Consider probiotics.** A daily dose of fermented foods like yogurt, kefir, tempeh or miso may help reduce symptoms.

**Watch what you eat.** Fatty foods, dairy products, alcohol and caffeine may trigger symptoms in some people.

**Manage stress.** Regular physical activity, breathing exercises and progressive relaxation are beneficial techniques for IBS.



## PRODUCE PICK of the Month

### Kale

This nutrient-packed dark leafy green vegetable contains 16 essential vitamins and minerals, including more iron than spinach and more calcium than broccoli. One cup or 250 millilitres of raw kale provides about 35 calories, two grams of fibre, and a whopping 723 percent of vitamin K.



## KNOW YOUR Numbers

### Are you getting enough vitamin A?

It's crucial to bone growth, eye and immune system health and helps cells function. Read the labels of your favourite foods to find how much vitamin A they have. Read the label below for a package of raw, chopped, frozen kale — look for it in larger grocery stores and give it a try.

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1 cup (100 g)	
Amount	
Calories 30	
Fat 0 g	0 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
+ Trans 0 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	1 %
Sodium 15 mg	2 %
Carbohydrate 5 g	8 %
Fibre 2 g	
Sugars 1 g	
Protein 3 g	
Vitamin A 60 %	Vitamin C 70 %
Calcium 10 %	Iron 6 %

Sugars 1 g  
Protein 3 g  
Vitamin A 60 %  
Calcium 10 %

## STAY IN TOUCH

### Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

phone: 800-871-9525

fax: 205-437-3084

e-mail: editor@personalbest.com

website: www.personalbest.com

**Managing Editor:** Susan Cottman

**Executive Editor:** Liz Carey

**Advisors:** Marica Borovich-Law, MBA; John Brennan, MD, CCFP; Canada Safety Council; Cara Rosenbloom, RD

Reproduction in any form of any part of this publication is a violation of federal copyright law and is strictly prohibited. ©2011, Oakstone® Publishing, LLC, dba Personal Best®, 100 Corporate Parkway, Suite 600, Birmingham, AL 35242; (800) 871-9525. Oakstone, Personal Best and Body Bulletin are registered trademarks of Oakstone Publishing, LLC.

The content herein is in no way intended to serve as a substitute for professional advice. Sources available on request.

# Glorious GREENS!

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

**K**ale, spinach and collards are making other vegetables GREEN with envy. These powerful, nutrient-dense choices are an important part of a healthy diet. Here's why:

### Award-winning vegetables

In a study from The Center for Science in the Public Interest, 84 different vegetables were rated for their overall nutrient content. Seven of the top 10 vegetables were leafy greens. Kale took top honours with the highest combined level of vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants compared with all other vegetables. Also in the top 10 were spinach (cooked and raw), collards, turnip greens, Swiss chard and mustard greens.

Research suggests this healthy combination of nutrients puts green vegetables on the front line as a defence against heart disease. And while one recent study raised questions with regard to cancer protection, many other studies suggest dark green vegetables reduce cancer risk. In addition to iron and vitamins A, C and K, each cupful of greens provides a bounty of protective antioxidants including:

- **Lutein**, which may decrease the risk for age-related macular degeneration, an eye disease.
- **Sulforaphane**, which may help decrease the risk of breast and colon cancer.
- **Beta carotene**, which may lower blood pressure levels and reduce heart disease risk.

### Buying and serving

Canada's Food Guide recommends having at least one serving of green vegetables each day — that's ½ cup or 125 milligrams. (Light green veggies such as iceberg lettuce and celery don't count.) Look for bountiful, leafy bunches in your grocer's produce section. Avoid buying bunches that are yellowing or have slimy stems. Raw leafy greens can be stored in the refrigerator for about a week.

Any leafy green can be stir-fried in a little garlic and olive oil or served raw in salads. Add a few handfuls to your favourite soup or stew to bump up the vitamin content.

Once you start experimenting with hearty greens, your vitamin intake will skyrocket along with your taste buds.



## Sautéed Kale & Mushrooms

- 1 lb (8-9 cups/1.8-2 L) kale
- 1 tbsp/15 ml olive oil
- 2 cups/500 ml crimini mushrooms, wiped clean, halved
- 1 tsp/5 ml minced garlic
- ½ cup/125 ml low-sodium chicken broth
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp/15 ml red wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp/15 ml grated Romano cheese

- 1 Rinse kale well; trim stems and thicker stalks, and chop.
- 2 Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat; add mushrooms and garlic and cook 2 minutes.
- 3 Add broth and kale, cover and steam 8 minutes.
- 4 Remove lid and continue to cook and stir until liquid evaporates and kale wilts, 7-8 minutes.
- 5 Season with salt and pepper, stir in vinegar. Sprinkle lightly with cheese and serve immediately.



### Nutrition Facts

MAKES 5 ONE-CUP/250ml SERVINGS.

Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 99	
<b>Total Fat</b> 4.8g	<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 13g
Saturated Fat .7g	Dietary Fibre 4.5g
<b>Cholesterol</b> 1mg	Sugars 0g
<b>Sodium</b> 99mg	<b>Protein</b> 7.6g

©2011 Oakstone® Publishing, LLC