



STOP SMOKING IN 2018!

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These Tools Make It Easier

Quitting smoking isn't easy. But good tools are available. The National Cancer Institute has a "Smoking Quitline" where you can talk to a trained counselor. Call 1-877-44U-QUIT (1-877-448-7848).

There are a number of nicotine-replacement therapies (NRTs) that can help break the urge to smoke. Typically these allow you to gradually taper off on the amount of nicotine you take in until you are able to more easily stop altogether. Here are a few of these NRT tools, some of which require a prescription:

- **Patch** – Nicotine enters your body through your skin and stays in your body for several hours after the patch is taken off.
- **Gums and lozenges** – Nicotine enters your body through the lining of the mouth.

- **Nasal spray** – Nicotine is sprayed into the nostril, but not inhaled. This is usually prescribed for very addicted smokers and itself can be more addictive than other NRTs.

- **Inhaler** – You puff this like a cigarette and the inhaler turns the nicotine into a vapor.

- **Withdrawal medicines** – Talk to your doctor about drugs that help reduce nicotine withdrawal symptoms, some of which can also block the effects of nicotine should you start smoking again.

Source: National Cancer Institute



Keeping a Food Diary

This Powerful Weight-Loss Tool Can Help

Keeping a record of the food you eat each day can help you lose weight or maintain it after weight loss. You don't need to show it to anyone. Being honest with, and accountable to, yourself as to how well you are following your plan can be a powerful motivator. If it works for you, go ahead and show it to someone else. If you are working with a doctor or a registered dietitian, the food diary can be a great way to check your progress.

Source: National Institutes of Health



Introducing New Foods to Young Children?

Make It Fun!

Young kids can be picky eaters, particularly if the new food is green or smells different. Learning to enjoy a wide variety of foods takes time. Here are some things you can do to make new foods more appealing:

- Present them in a fun way. A popular example is “ants on a log,” made with celery, peanut butter and raisins.
- Offer healthy dips for vegetables, such as hummus and bean dip.

- Grow vegetables as a family. This can be a lot of fun and kids will take pride in what they grow.

- If you honestly model enjoying new foods in a low-key manner, it is likely your children will want to imitate you. This is a great way to introduce healthy foods from different cultures.

Source: Florida Department of Health

Your Eyes Are You Overdue for a Dilated Eye Exam?

Often people think their vision is fine, but when they get that first pair of glasses or contact lenses, they find out what they have been missing. Possibly improving your eyesight is only one reason to get your eyes checked. A comprehensive dilated eye exam is the only way to reliably detect many eye diseases in their early stages.

Early treatment can lead to the prevention of some common eye diseases that can cause permanent vision loss or blindness, such as cataracts, diabetic retinopathy (the leading cause of blindness in American adults), glaucoma or age-related macular degeneration.

Consult with your ophthalmologist or optometrist regarding how often you should get an eye exam based on your age and your family and personal health history.

Children should have a vision screening, which does not include dilating the eyes, by a pediatrician, optometrist or ophthalmologist at least once between the ages of three and five.

Sources: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Eye Institute



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Beating Winter Coughs

These Tips Can Help Bring Relief

Ah, winter: Hot, dry indoor air and cold, dry outdoor air. It's no surprise how easy it is to end up with a nagging cough this time of year.

When you're outside, protect yourself from cold, dry air by covering your nose and mouth with a scarf. If you have asthma, COPD or bronchitis, it is doubly important to make sure that you take all of your prescribed medications. Of course, if your cough worsens you'll want to see your doctor. But for a simple dry cough, these tips can help:

- **Drink fluids.** Liquid helps thin mucus. Warm liquids can also soothe your throat.
- **Suck on sugar-free cough drops.** They can help ease a dry cough.
- **Moisturize the air.** Take a steamy shower. If you use a humidifier, keep it clean according to the manufacturer's instructions to make sure it doesn't add mold or fungus to your environment.
- **Avoid tobacco smoke.** Smoking or breathing second-hand smoke irritates your lungs and can worsen coughs.

Sources: American Lung Association;
the Mayo Clinic

DID YOU KNOW?



Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia among older adults and the fifth leading cause of death for adults ages 65 and older. Although the cause is still unknown and there is no cure, scientists are learning more about it every day. Known risk factors include aging, diabetes, high blood pressure, smoking and a family history of dementia.

To improve your brain health:

- Be physically active.
- Quit smoking.
- Manage diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity.
- Learn new things.
- Surround yourself with family and friends. Connect with the community.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention