

November 2006

HealthSTAT focus

Health & Wellness Information
to Improve your Condition

**November 16, 2006 is the 30th Annual American Cancer Society
Great American Smokeout**

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your loved ones. To kick the habit for good, you need motivation, dependable support, and sound strategies. The moment you quit smoking you begin to lower your risk of getting a tobacco-related illness and begin to improve your overall health. But if you need more reasons to quit, read on!

When Smokers Quit: Health Benefits Over Time

20 minutes after quitting: Your heart rate and blood pressure drops. ("Effect of Smoking on Arterial Stiffness and Pulse Pressure Amplification", Mahmud, A, Feely, J. 2003. *Hypertension*:41:183.)

12 hours after quitting: The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal. (US Surgeon General's Report, 1988, p. 202)

2 weeks to 3 months after quitting: Your circulation improves and your lung function increases. (US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, pp.193, 194,196, 285, 323)

1 to 9 months after quitting: Coughing and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection. (US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, pp. 285-287, 304)

1 year after quitting: The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's. (US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, p. vi)

5 years after quitting: Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker 5 to 15 years after quitting. (US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, p. vi)

10 years after quitting: The lung cancer death rate is about half that of a continuing smoker's. The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, cervix, and pancreas decrease. (US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, pp. vi, 131, 148, 152, 155, 164,166)

15 years after quitting: The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a nonsmoker's. (US Surgeon General's Report, 1990, p. vi).

Tobacco isn't just bad for your health. It is hard on your pocketbook, too. If you pay \$4 for a pack of cigarettes, and smoke a pack a day, the cost for cigarettes is \$28 per week, \$112 per month, and **\$1,344 per year**. If you have been a smoker for 5 years, you have spent approximately \$6,720! **Think what you could have done with \$6,720.**

To successfully "kick the habit", you need to plan your Quit Day. Plan to give up cigarettes for just one day. There are many **Great American Smokeout** events in communities around the country already planned for November 16, 2006 Make November 16, 2006 your official "Quit Day". **Go on – be a Quitter!** For more information and quit tips, visit the American Cancer Society website at www.cancer.org.

Kids Health Topic – Ear Infections

Does any of this happen with your kids?

Your child:

Has been crying all night.

Wakes up every hour or two.

Won't eat.

Has a fever.

Pulls at his/ her ears, or complains of ear pain and pressure.

If so, your child may have an ear infection. Bacteria often causes this problem. Antibiotics may help, but sometimes they don't. You play a big role in getting your child well. The more you know about ear infections, the better you can fight them.

What causes an ear infection?

An ear infection begins when fluid builds up in the middle ear. This is the space just behind the ear drum. The eardrum is a tissue that separates the middle ear from the external ear and vibrates to sounds. When fluid builds up in the middle ear and does not drain out as it should, bacteria often grow. These bacteria can cause an ear infection.

If you think your child has an ear infection, you should:

Call your health care provider. He or she may write a prescription for an antibiotic. But don't push for one – sometimes it is not needed. Let your health care provider decide the best way to treat your child. Antibiotics are medicines that kill bacteria. They can also stop bacteria from growing. **Antibiotics do not treat viruses, colds, or the flu.** Your health care provider will decide if your child needs an antibiotic, and if so, which antibiotic is the right one. He or she will think about many things when choosing an antibiotic. Only your health care provider can decide what kind of infection your child has. He or she can also decide the best antibiotic to treat it. You may live in an area where there is a high rate of "resistance". This means that some antibiotics may not work for your child where you live. Your health care provider will think about this when prescribing an antibiotic for your child.

Your child feels better. Does he/she need to take the rest of the medicine?

YES. Your child may start to feel better before all of the medication is taken. But if you stop early, the infection may not be gone. Give your child **ALL** of the doses of the medication your health care provider says need to be taken.

EAR INFECTION TIPS

- ❖ If your child has any of the symptoms listed, see a doctor.
- ❖ Let your health care provider decide if an antibiotic is needed.
- ❖ Don't ask for an antibiotic if your child has a virus, cold or the flu – antibiotics will not work.
- ❖ Give your child **ALL** of the doses of the medication prescribed to him or her.
- ❖ Don't give one child's antibiotic to another child even if the symptoms are the same.
- ❖ Throw away any leftover medicine after your child takes all of the doses the doctor says must be taken.
- ❖ Follow your doctor's instructions and give medication correctly (at the right time and for as many days as needed).
- ❖ Always keep medication out of the reach of children.

Source: Pfizer



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4601 Charlotte Park Drive
Suite 390
Charlotte, NC 28217
(704) 529-6161

Prepared & Reviewed by:
Eric Hart, MD
Chief Medical Officer
&
Lisa McDaniel,
VP Business Development

If you have comments questions or suggestions for the newsletter, please send them to:
lisa.mcdaniel@healthstatinc.com



focus on
Men's Health

Take a Potent Daily Multivitamin and Mineral Supplement

Although there is no substitute for a good diet, for optimal nutrition, you need to take a high-potency multivitamin and mineral supplement. Even if you are eating right, it's unlikely that your food contains all the nutrients you need. Poor soil quality, storage, processing and cooking deplete our food of vitamins and minerals.

Taking a high quality daily supplement is "health insurance" against possible deficiencies.

www.alive.com



Weighty Issues for Holiday Eating



5 Tips for Not Losing Track of Your Diet During the Holidays

Do you find it almost impossible to stay conscientious about your nutrition and weight during the holidays? Of course you do. More than half of all Americans are overweight: You are not alone. With Thanksgiving fast-approaching and the Christmas holidays just around the corner, this time of year is normally associated with weight gain. It comes from too much pumpkin pie, too much eggnog, too many parties and gatherings with fancy finger foods, cookies and desserts. All of these things are part of our family holiday traditions, and things we look forward to each year. They can add inches to our waistlines if we aren't careful about our consumption.

A new government study might give you a ray of hope for weight management during the holidays. The study shows that Americans gain only about one pound over the holidays. The study found that people participating were influenced by two main factors over the holidays:

- 1) the level of their hunger, and
- 2) the level of their activity.

In other words, those who reported being less active or more hungry during the holidays had the greatest weight gain.

So common sense says if you can stay focused on dealing with just those two things, you'll probably win your personal holiday weight loss battle. At the very least, you will win by not adding more pounds to what you are already trying to shed.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of weight gain," says Dr. Samuel Klein, the Director of the Center for Human Nutrition at Washington University in St. Louis, MO. "Preventing the increase in weight is a lot easier and better than actually gaining weight and then trying to get it off again." So the answer seems simple: eat less and exercise more. The reality of implementation is, of course, far more difficult.

The good news is that most of the people overestimate how much weight they gained over the holidays. Fewer than 10% gain 5 pounds or more. The bad news is the small amount of weight gained is never lost. One pound of weight gain is quite a small amount, but since it's not usually lost again, the weight adds up over time to obesity.

We all know there are tons of tips out and about this time of year, designed to help us keep from putting on that extra pound or two during the holidays. Unfortunately what's usually not talked about is the reality of day-to-day holiday stress and situations.



Listed below are five tips along with their reality checks.

Holiday Weight Loss Tip 1: Stay active. The best thing you can do is try to stick to your normal schedule and routine.

Holiday Reality Check: It's pretty hard to have any kind of decent routine in the busy months of November and December. Busy people tend to sacrifice yoga classes, long walks, and visits to the gym because they need time for extra things like decorating the house, cooking, cleaning up before the visitors get there, and of course, shopping.

The Good News: Walking around the shopping mall and stores is great exercise, and so is cleaning the house. In addition to those activities, decorating can be quite intensive too. You're climbing up and down to hang things; lifting, lugging, and dragging boxes out of storage; bending, twisting and turning to get it all looking just right. So don't beat yourself up about not making it to the gym... you're getting plenty of activity and every little bit helps.

Holiday Weight Loss Tip 2: Don't let yourself get too hungry. If you go to a party and you're starving, everything will look even more scrumptious than normal. And of course, you'll eat much more because of it. Try starting each day with a good, solid breakfast – particularly something with protein. And when you're at the party, try munching on the veggies to help keep you feeling full. These two things will help your hunger stay under control, and will in turn help you refrain from "gorging" on anything you see just because you're famished.

Holiday Reality Check: We're all very busy during the holidays, and it's not always possible to remember to eat - let alone eat well – particularly in the morning when we may have already overslept and are now running late for everything. And eating healthy at a party isn't always possible either: Not everyone in this country serves vegetable plates, salads, or fruit bowls. Sometimes the only things in site are junk - chips, candy, and cookies and other high calorie treats.

Here's a suggestion: Try taking your own veggie plate to a party where you know there won't be one available. A quick and easy way to do this is simply buy a bag or two of pre-cut veggies and some ranch salad dressing. Alternatively, eat a decent meal before you go to the party. Don't overdo things, but don't make it a light snack either. Eating first will help you to just "nibble" a bit on the worst of the holiday treats offered.

See "Tips" Continued on the next page



"Tips" continued from previous page

Holiday Weight Loss Tip 3: Stay away from the food. Literally. Just don't go anywhere near the buffet table, appetizers, or treats... and you'll be fine.

Holiday Reality Check: In most cases, the food is everywhere. And even if it's not right in front of your face, you sure can smell it! Trying to just "stay away from it" is pretty unrealistic - and it can feel like torture for some of us. And, for most people, when you can't have something, you want it even more. So trying to stay away from the food will most likely just make you overindulge worse than you would have otherwise.

Try this instead: Allow yourself whatever you'd like. But with a catch - take only half the amount you normally would. And take just one food item. Eat that and enjoy it without guilt. Then, wait a full 20-30 minutes before you get something else. Then repeat the process: One item, half the portion size as you normally would, enjoy it without guilt, then wait before getting something else. Allowing yourself to eat gets rid of the mentality of "I can't have it" (and thus I'm more determined to have it). It lets you enjoy the good food and the holidays, without beating yourself up. This is healthy and can help tremendously with the way you view food and eating in general. Only taking half of it though, will help you not take in as much calories, fat, sugar or other bad stuff you are trying to avoid. And then waiting 20-30 minutes before you get something else will help your body realize when it's had enough... or too much. So you're much less likely to overdo things, and feel horrible physically later.

Holiday Weight Loss Tip 4: Wear cloths that are slightly tight on you. This should help you feel full faster, and keep you from eating too much food.

Holiday Reality Check: We want to wear looser cloths because we're looking forward to eating all that great food! Yes, wearing something tight might help us not go back for a second helping of potatoes... or it might ruin a favorite outfit. In the end, how you approach this tip is up to you, and you alone. Make your decision and be happy with it.

Holiday Weight Loss Tip 5: Keep your portions small. Try to load up on salad and vegetables, and take just tiny amounts of other high-calorie options..

Holiday Reality Check: Taking just a "bite sized" amount of anything is going to put you into the have-not mental state mentioned earlier. You'll feel as if you can't have something, and you'll want it all the more.

Try the tip noted above instead: Take half the size you normally would. Trying to have just a little bite of pie will whet your appetite for more, but having a whole piece is going a bit overboard - particularly if there's 5 different pies for you to sample. So try actual sampling instead. Cut a piece half the normal size. This allows you to have a "whole slice", and more than several little bites. Then wait about 20 minutes before you go and try the next pie. Even if you end up eating a bit of all 5 pies, by having a half-sized slice of each, you've drastically cut the amount of calories, carbs and sugars compared to what you would have had with whole slices. And you'll still feel stuffed and satisfied, instead of deprived and resentful.

Another recent study showed that people who weighed themselves often had greater success in losing weight and maintaining their weight loss. Try this during the holidays, but don't weigh yourself too often. Try weighing in once a week, and try to weigh at the same time of day. This will help to eliminate any natural weight fluctuations which occur during the day.

So there you have it! Five different, common holiday weight loss and eating tips, followed by the reality check of each, and a suggested compromise that should help you enjoy the holidays to their fullest, without depriving yourself of the great food we all look forward to. Plus, don't forget that you can use the scales in your favor in managing your weight long term.

Whatever you decide to do, remember to Enjoy Happy Holidays!

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focus on Women's Health



Pap Test Guidelines Revised

The American Cancer Society has revised its guidelines on Pap tests, recommending for the first time that women at low risk for cervical cancer don't need them. The revisions are designed to spare women from unnecessary, invasive medical procedures. The new guidelines say testing isn't needed for young women who are not sexually active; women 70 or older who have had normal Pap tests in the past; and women who have had hysterectomies for non-cancer-related reasons. They also recommend that sexually active women begin getting Pap tests within three years of the start of sexual activity, but no later than age 21. The problem with Pap tests, according to the experts who wrote the new guidelines, is that they detect non-cancerous lesions, causing doctors to perform additional tests that needlessly worry patients, cost money and sometimes have harmful effects, such as reduced fertility. Talk to your doctor or your **HealthSTAT** practitioner about the Pap Test schedule that is best for you.

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