



# AVIATION MEDICAL BULLETIN™

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## EATING ON A DATE

Resist the primal urge to order the 24-ounce steak. A study from Indiana University of Pennsylvania found that men who dined with women purchased an average of 1,141 calories' worth of food, versus 900 calories when they ate with guys. "Men may be trying to prove their masculinity around women by buying more calories," says study author.

*Source: Psychological Reports*

## QUICK TIPS IN AN EMERGENCY

Witnessing a medical emergency can be overwhelming and scary. However, if you're on the scene, there's a good chance you probably know the victim, which makes your actions all the more important. Commit the critical tips below to memory now, so that if you come upon a crisis, your actions will be a matter of second nature.

- ✦ Treat any injuries that you can, but minimize body movement to prevent further injury.
- ✦ Do not move the person's head.
- ✦ Keep the person lying down. If you observe vomit or blood coming from the mouth and nose, turn the person on his or her side to prevent him or her from choking.
- ✦ Do not move the person from the site unless the surrounding area is dangerous; i.e., you're located on a highway at the scene of a car accident.
- ✦ Try to help the person get comfortable—loosen collars and unbutton or cut away tight clothing. Cover the person with a blanket if one is available.
- ✦ DO NOT give the person anything to eat or drink.

*Source: American Academy of Family Physicians.*

## DO YOU HAVE SITTING DISEASE?

Too much time sitting down may spell bad news for your health. Chances are you're reading this article while perched in a chair. And, if you're like most computer users, you've been there for a while.

Consider how much you sit in a day: driving during your morning commute to an 8-hour-a-day desk job, and then unwinding on the couch in front of the television all evening. What's more, do you depend on email, cell phone apps, direct-deposit paychecks, and online shopping to accomplish tasks that 10 or 20 years ago would have required you to get up and run errands? If so, then you may have "sitting disease," a catchy phrase for a sedentary lifestyle that might be putting your health at risk.

### The Price of Sitting Too Much

A growing body of research shows that long periods of physical inactivity raise your risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and obesity. British experts linked prolonged periods of sitting to a greater likelihood of disease. And Australian researchers reported that each hour spent watching TV is linked to an 18% increase in the risk of dying from cardiovascular disease -- because that time is spent sitting down.

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## WALK, WALK, WALK

Most people take 4,000 steps per day, but it takes at least 10,000 to keep you fit.

*Source: Self*

## HEART DISEASE TESTING

**Electrocardiogram (EKG)** An EKG (also ECG) is a painless test that uses electrodes placed on the skin to record the heart's electrical activity. The test provides information about your heart rhythm and damage to the heart muscle. An EKG can help your doctor diagnose a heart attack and evaluate abnormalities such as an enlarged heart. The results can be compared to future EKGs to track changes in the condition of your heart.

**Stress Test** The stress test measures how your heart responds to exertion. If you have an exercise stress test, you'll either walk on a treadmill or ride a stationary bike while the level of difficulty increases. At the same time, your EKG, heart rate, and blood pressure will be monitored as your heart works harder. Doctors use a stress test to evaluate whether there is an adequate supply of blood to the heart muscle.

**Holter Monitor** A Holter monitor is a portable heart rhythm recorder. If your doctor suspects a heart rhythm problem, she may ask you to wear one for one or two days. It records the heart's continuous electrical activity day and night, compared with an EKG, which is a snapshot in time. The doctor will probably also ask you to keep a log of your activities and to note any symptoms and when they occur.

**Chest X-ray** A chest X-ray is a picture of your heart, lungs, and chest bones that's made by using a very small amount of radiation. Chest X-rays can be used to look for heart and lung abnormalities.

In this image, the bulge seen on the right side is an enlarged left ventricle, the heart's main pumping chamber.

**Echocardiogram** An echocardiogram uses sound waves (ultrasound) to generate moving images of the heart. The test can assess the chambers and valves of your heart and how well your heart muscle and heart valves are working. It's useful in diagnosing and evaluating several types of heart disease, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of treatments.

**Cardiac CT** Cardiac computerized tomography (known as cardiac CT) takes detailed images of the heart and its blood vessels. A computer stacks the images to create a 3-D picture of heart. A cardiac CT can be used to look for plaque or calcium buildup in the coronary arteries, heart valve problems, and other types of heart disease.

**Cardiac Catheterization** Cardiac catheterization helps diagnose and treat some heart conditions. The doctor guides a narrow tube, called a catheter, through a blood vessel in your arm or leg until it reaches the coronary arteries. Dye is injected into each coronary artery, making them easy to see with an X-ray. This reveals the extent and severity of any blockages. Treatments such as angioplasty or stenting can be done during this procedure.

*Source: Harvard Heart Letter*

## EATING WELL TO CONTROL CHOLESTEROL

High blood cholesterol can lead to cholesterol buildup and blockage in your arteries, which can cause complications such as stroke and heart disease. What you eat may significantly affect the amount of cholesterol in your blood. Here are some tips for adopting a heart-healthy diet that's designed to keep your cholesterol at optimal levels.

**Avoid saturated and trans fats** Saturated fats often make up the largest source of cholesterol in a person's diet. Saturated fats increase low-density lipoprotein (LDL), or "bad," cholesterol that clogs the arteries. Common sources of saturated fats are fatty meats; full-fat dairy products such as milk, ice cream and cheese; and certain tropical oils such as palm and coconut.

Trans fats can have an even worse effect on your cholesterol levels. These fats form when hydrogen is added to vegetable oils in a process called hydrogenation that makes the oils less likely to spoil. Trans fats are commonly found in margarine, shortening, and commercially fried and baked foods.

**Choose unsaturated fats** Replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats can lower your total cholesterol. Find unsaturated fats in vegetable oils such as olive, safflower and soybean; nuts; olives; avocados; and fatty fish such as salmon and sardines.

**Minimize dietary cholesterol** Cholesterol in foods can raise both total and bad cholesterol. Sources of dietary cholesterol include eggs, meats and full-fat dairy products; eggs contribute the most cholesterol. Doctors recommend decreasing dietary cholesterol to reduce LDL levels. The American Heart Association recommends consuming less than 300 milligrams of cholesterol a day.

**Choose soluble fiber** Soluble fiber makes it more difficult for your body to absorb dietary cholesterol. It can be found in foods like oats (including oatmeal), barley, beans, and some fruits and vegetables.

**Eat more plant-based foods** Plant-based foods, such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and vegetable oils, don't

contain cholesterol. Instead, they contain plant-derived compounds called phytosterols, which are similar in structure and function to cholesterol. But phytosterols help lower cholesterol in people with normal-to-high levels of cholesterol.

**Include omega-3 fatty acids** Omega-3 fatty acids are essential fatty acids that your body doesn't produce and has to get from the foods you eat. They raise high-density lipoprotein (HDL), or "good," cholesterol, which helps prevent cholesterol buildup in the arteries. Omega-3 fatty acids can be found in fatty fish and fish oils, as well as in nuts, seeds, and canola and soybean oils.

*Source: Nutrition Action Healthletter*

## UNDERSTANDING COLORECTAL CANCER

### *What Is It?*

Not including skin cancer, colorectal cancer is the third most frequently diagnosed cancer in men and women and the second highest cause of cancer deaths in the U.S. Yet, when found early, it is highly curable. This type of cancer occurs when abnormal cells grow in the lining of the large intestine (colon) or rectum. Learn more about who gets colorectal cancer, how it is detected, and what the latest treatments can accomplish.

### *How It Starts*

Colorectal cancers often begin as polyps -- benign growths on the interior surface of the colon. The two most common types of intestinal polyps are adenomas and hyperplastic polyps. They develop when there are errors in the way cells grow and repair the lining of the colon. Most polyps remain benign, but some have the potential to turn cancerous. Removing them early prevents colorectal cancer.

### *Risk Factors You Can't Control*

Your risk of colorectal cancer depends on genetics and lifestyle. Factors you can't control include:

- Age -- most patients are older than 50
- Polyps or inflammatory bowel disease
- Family history of colorectal cancer
- History of ovarian or breast cancer

### *Risk Factors You Can Control*

Some factors that raise the risk of colorectal cancer are within your control:

- Diet high in red or processed meats, or meats cooked at high temperatures
- Being obese (excess fat around the waist)
- Exercising too little

- Smoking or heavy alcohol use

### *Warning Signs*

There are usually no early warning signs for colorectal cancer. For this reason it's important to get screened. Detecting cancer early means it's more curable. As the disease progresses, patients may notice blood in the stool, abdominal pain, a change in bowel habits (such as constipation or diarrhea), unexplained weight loss, or fatigue. By the time these symptoms appear, tumors tend to be larger and more difficult to treat.

### *Screening*

Because colorectal cancer is stealthy, screenings are the key to early detection. Beginning at age 50, most people should have a colonoscopy every 10 years. This procedure uses a tiny camera to examine the entire colon and rectum. These tests not only find tumors early, but can actually prevent colorectal cancer by removing polyps (shown here).

### *Virtual Colonoscopy*

There is now an alternative to colonoscopy that uses CT scan images to construct a 3-D model of your colon. Called virtual colonoscopy, the procedure can reveal polyps or other abnormalities without actually inserting a camera inside your body. The main disadvantage is that if polyps are found, a real colonoscopy will still be needed to remove and evaluate them.

### *Diagnosing*

If testing reveals a possible tumor, the next step is a biopsy. During a colonoscopy, your doctor will remove polyps and take tissue samples from any parts of the colon that look unusual. This tissue is examined under a microscope to determine whether or not it is cancerous. Shown here is a color-enhanced, magnified view of colon cancer cells.

### *Staging*

If cancer is detected, it will be "staged," a process of finding out how far the cancer has spread. Tumor size may not correlate with the stage of cancer. Staging also enables your doctor to determine what type of treatment you will receive.

- **Stage 0** -- Cancer is only in the innermost lining of the colon or rectum.
- **Stage I** -- Cancer has grown into the muscle layer of the colon or rectum.

- **Stage II** -- Cancer has grown into or through the outer most layer of the colon or rectum.
- **Stage III** -- Cancer has spread to one or more lymph nodes in the area.
- **Stage IV** -- Cancer has spread to other parts of the body, such as the liver, lung, or bones.

### **Survival Rates**

The outlook for your recovery depends on the stage of your cancer, with higher stages meaning more serious cancer. The five-year survival rate refers to the percentage of people who live five years or more after being diagnosed. Stage I has a 74% five-year survival rate while stage IV has a five-year survival rate of only 6%.

*Source: Harvard Men's Health Watch*

### **GRAPE JUICE VS RED WINE?**

Some research studies suggest that red and purple grape juices may provide some of the same heart benefits of red wine, including:

- ✓ Reducing the risk of blood clots
- ✓ Reducing low-density lipoprotein (LDL, or "bad") cholesterol
- ✓ Preventing damage to blood vessels in your heart
- ✓ Helping maintain a healthy blood pressure

Grapes are rich in health-protecting antioxidants, including resveratrol and flavonoids. These antioxidants are found mainly in the skin, stem, leaf and seeds of grapes, rather than in their pulp.

The amount of antioxidants in grapes depends on many factors, including the kind of grape, its geographic origin and how it's processed. Dark red and purple grapes tend to be higher in antioxidants than are white or green grapes. Likewise, the level of antioxidants, such as resveratrol found in wine, varies with higher levels in red wine.

Keep in mind that it's also beneficial to eat whole grapes — not just grape juice. Some research suggests that whole grapes deliver the same amount of antioxidants that are in grape juice and wine but have the added benefit of providing dietary fiber.

*Source: Mayo Clinic Health Letter*

### **FIVE THINGS SUCCESSFUL DIETERS DO**

Why do some people successfully lose weight and keep it off, while so many others fail? That's what the National

Weight Control Registry has been looking into for over a decade. Begun in 1994, the registry has amassed information on nearly 5,000 people who have maintained at least a 30-pound weight loss for five or more years. Periodically, they are interviewed to see what makes them able to stick to their goals. According to Dr. James Hill, the registry's co-founder, these successful maintainers share several key strategies:

**1. They eat a high-carb, low-fat diet.** The low-carb craze hasn't influenced these successful maintainers. On average, they get most of their calories (55% to 60%) from carbohydrates and 24% of their calories from fat; the rest is from protein. They emphasize "good" carbs—fruits, vegetables, and other high-fiber foods—not high-sugar carbohydrates.

**2. They are conscious of calories.** Successful maintainers know that total calories count, no matter what diet they follow. Whether the calories come from carbs, fat, or protein, a calorie is a calorie.

**3. They eat breakfast.** Eight out of ten successful maintainers eat breakfast every day. This may help people better manage calories during the day, says Dr. Hill. They also eat often—an average of five smaller meals and snacks a day.

**4. They self-monitor.** Successful maintainers weigh themselves at least once a week; some more frequently. Many occasionally still keep food diaries.

**5. They engage in lots of physical activity—60 to 90 minutes a day.** In line with the new government guidelines, successful maintainers carve out time every day for planned exercise, but they also look for ways to get more activity during the rest of the day. Walking is their No.1 activity.

*Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter*

### **UPHILL RUNNING**

Running uphill—even slowly—is the best way to build leg strength for running, says Jeff Galloway, former Olympic distance runner and columnist for Runner's World. He says a beginner should start slowly by running a hilly course one day a week. Then run repeats uphill (50 to 300 meters) at a 10-K race effort and then recover by walking down.

*Source: Runner's World*

## AHEAD OF THE CURVE

In 1998, the World Health Organization predicted that 22 million Americans would have diabetes by the year 2025. We're way ahead of schedule: We reached 21 million in 2005.

*Source: Prevention*

## "EXTRA LEAN" = 50% FAT

Meats labeled "extra lean" or "10% fat" are misleading. The percentage of fat is by weight, not the "percentage of calories from fat." Because raw meat is half water, the calories from fat are actually over 50% in a "10% fat" piece of meat, and nearly 70% in a piece labeled "20% fat."

*Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter*

## HOW TO SPOT AN IMPAIRED DRIVER

- ✓ Wide turns.
- ✓ Straddling the center line or weaving, swerving, or drifting.
- ✓ Face close to windshield.
- ✓ Almost hitting other cars or objects.
- ✓ Driving slower than 10 mph below the speed limit.
- ✓ Following too close.
- ✓ Slow response to traffic signals.
- ✓ Headlights off at night.
- ✓ Sudden accelerating or stopping without cause.
- ✓ Erratic braking.
- ✓ Driving off the road.

Never try to stop a drunk driver. Call your local law enforcement agency and give them the location and time you saw the suspected drunk driver, along with the model, color, and license number of the car. Describe how the car was being driven and the direction it was traveling.

*Source: National Coalition Against Drunk & Drugged Driving*

## SMOKERS' BLOOD FLOW

Those who smoke have 14 percent less blood flow to their hearts than non-smokers. A recent study by the University

of California at Los Angeles School of Medicine found that the decrease in blood flow occurred, regardless of the amount of fat in artery walls. This study indicates that smoking adversely affects circulation even before the onset of coronary artery disease.

*Source: The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

## SHOCKING STATS

**60%** of doctors don't follow hand-washing guidelines.

**96%** of doctors agree they should report impaired or incompetent colleagues or those who make serious mistakes, but 46% of them admit to having turned a blind eye at least once.

**94%** of doctors have accepted some kind of freebie from a drug company.

**44%** of doctors admit they're overweight.

**58%** would give adolescents contraceptives without parental consent.

*Source: New England Journal of Medicine*

## GAS MONEY

Americans spend an extra \$2.2 billion at the gas pump each year because of overweight and obesity.

Although not everyone is overweight, the average American man now weighs 191 pounds, 25 more than in 1960. The average woman weighs 164 pounds, up from 140 in 1960.

The added weight accounts for an extra 1 billion gallons of gas being used annually.

*Source: American Heart Association*

## EXERCISE VS. DIET

The most common approach to losing weight is dieting. The most effective way to lose weight is to exercise.

A study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine found had one group diet by cutting their intake by 700 calories a day. The other group performed 700 calories of exercise a day but did not change their eating habits.

At the end of three months, both groups had lost an average of 16 pounds. But the exercising group had lost significantly more body fat while a higher portion of the dieting groups loss was in muscle tissue.

The best approach, of course, is a both/and. Watching

what you eat while exercising is the most sensible way to lose weight.

*Source: HealthNews*

### SERVING SIZE

America's growth in girth may in part due to the fact that U.S. portion sizes for foods approximately double those of some foreign countries. One example is the plain bagel. An American bagel weighs 4 ounces compared to 2 ounces when originally introduced.

An American croissant weighs 2 ounces compared to a French one that weighs only 1 ounce. A quesadilla in the U.S. is 10 inches compared to its original 5-inch size.

It's not surprising that about 55 percent of Americans are overweight, and 20 percent are obese.

*Source: HealthNews*

### ELLIPTICAL TRAINING

If you've been to a fitness center recently, you've probably noticed how many exercisers are using elliptical trainers. They have become one of the most popular pieces for cardiovascular workouts.

If you think the workout looks easy, think again. "Elliptical training can be a great activity," says Peter Francis, PhD, "as long as you are conscious of your core muscles and posture."

Here are some DO's and DON'Ts on proper form from Francis:

- ◆ **DO** activate your quads, hamstrings and glutes by keeping heels flat on the pedals.
- ◆ **DON'T** stand on the balls of your feet
- ◆ **DO** stand tall with your back straight, chest up, abs pulled in. The better your posture, the more efficiently your muscles work.
- ◆ **DON'T** sway from side to side. Concentrate on moving your body only from the hips down.

*Source: Women's Sports & Fitness*

### DRINKING PROBLEM

Most people only drink 4.5 8-ounce servings of liquid a day, reports a nationwide Cornell University Medical School study of more than 3,000 people. That's slightly more than half the recommended amount.

*Source: Hope Health*

### SO YOU WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR HEART HEALTH

Don't think that you have to make big changes to have an effect on your heart health, though. Even small, basic steps can have dramatic effects.

One of the biggest drops in heart disease risk occurs when you go from a sedentary lifestyle to being active as little as one hour a week. That's right, just one hour. Obviously, the more active you are the better. But just one solid hour of activity over the course of a week makes a difference.

Health professionals at Mayo Clinic have developed the Mayo Clinic Healthy Heart Plan. The key messages in the plan is that even little steps may make a big difference. Some of these steps for getting started are in a two-week "Quick Start" section of the book termed Eat 5, Move 10, Sleep 8.

Here's a summary of the Mayo Clinic Healthy Heart Plan's quick start:

- **Eat 5.** Eat five servings of fruit and vegetables a day to boost your heart health. Start by eating breakfast and including at least one serving of fruit or vegetable. Snack on vegetables or fruit in between meals. Make a conscious effort to include fruits and vegetables in your daily meals. Don't worry so much about foods you shouldn't eat, just work on getting five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- **Move 10.** Add at least 10 minutes of moderately intense physical activity to what you do every day. Sure government recommendations say 30 minutes or more, but the bottom line is even 10 minutes makes a difference. For example, just 60 to 90 minutes a week of physical activity can reduce your heart disease risk by up to half. That's a big benefit from a pretty small commitment on your part. It doesn't have to be elaborate — take the stairs, take a walk, just get moving. As you become more active, you can try to increase your total amount of activity a day.
- **Sleep 8.** Quality sleep is good for your heart. It can be a challenge to make time for good sleep, but it's important. For two weeks try to get eight hours of good, quality sleep each night. Yes, each person's sleep needs vary slightly, but eight is a good number to shoot for.

All of these tips — Eat 5, Move 10, Sleep 8 — are meant to be tried for two weeks before you move on to a more established healthy heart plan. But there's nothing wrong

with continuing this quick start for longer periods. Consider trying other reputable diet and exercise plans offered by the American Heart Association and government agencies. The point is to get started with something and keep at it.

**CANCER FACT VS. FICTION**

**1. If you get cancer it's usually because someone in your family had cancer.**

**True or False**      *Correct Answer: False*  
 Half of men and one-third of women in the U.S. will get cancer at some point. But only about 1 in 20 cases is linked to genes from parents.

The bottom line: Doctors aren't sure why some people get cancer and others don't. It's not just about your genes.

**2. Heavy drinking can raise your chances of getting cancer.**

**True or False**      *Correct Answer: True*  
 Drinking alcohol may make you more likely to get mouth, liver, colon, breast, and other cancers. It doesn't matter if you prefer beer, wine, or liquor. It's how much you drink that counts. The more you drink, the higher the risk.

If you drink, limit yourself to two drinks a day if you're a man and one a day if you're a woman.

**3. Artificial sweeteners can cause cancer.**

**True or False**      *Correct Answer: False*  
 There's no evidence that the sweeteners in those little pink, blue, yellow, or green packets cause cancer. Studies don't show a link between aspartame (blue), saccharin (pink), or sucralose (yellow) and cancer in people.

Newer sugar substitutes, such as sorbitol and stevia (green), also appear to be safe.

**4. Antiperspirants make you more likely to get breast cancer.**

**True or False**      *Correct Answer: False*  
 It's safe to use antiperspirant or deodorant.

There are no strong studies and very little evidence to show that you have a greater chance of getting breast cancer if you use antiperspirants.

**5. Which food is linked to colon cancer?**

Tofu, Lunchmeat, or Oysters

**Correct Answer: Lunchmeat**

People who eat a lot of processed meats, such as hot dogs and lunchmeat, are more likely to get colon cancer. The

link isn't completely clear, but it might be because of nitrites. Those are chemicals added to food to stop bacteria and preserve color.

Red meat also is linked to colon cancer. In general, limit the amount of red meat you eat. Instead choose other sources of protein, such as chicken, fish, or beans.

**6. Which of these may help ease nausea in people getting cancer treatment?**

Acupuncture, Ear Candling, or Magnetic Therapy

**Correct Answer: Acupuncture**

Acupuncture can help with nausea and vomiting from chemotherapy. It can also help people who have mouth dryness from radiation therapy.

If you are being treated for cancer and want to try acupuncture, let your doctor know.

**7. For most cancers, a biopsy can cause cancer cells to spread.**

**True or False**      *Correct Answer: False*

During a biopsy, a doctor takes a small sample of tissue from your body to check it for cancer. With most cancers, it's very unlikely that this procedure will cause cancer to spread.

Ovarian cancer is an exception. Doctors don't usually do a biopsy of an ovary because that could spread cancer cells. If your doctor suspects cancer, he or she may remove the entire ovary instead.

**8. What can you do to lower your chance of getting cancer?**

Avoid stress, Nothing, Exercise

**Correct Answer: Exercise**

Exercise, along with healthy eating and managing your weight, can make you less likely to get certain cancers, including breast and colon cancer.

Still, even if you are active, get any routine cancer screenings that your doctor recommends.

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