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BETTER THAN A BOX OF CANDY ...

WHAT'S INSIDE

Sleep and Your Eyes

2

Why Do We Need Vitamin E?

3

Sugar and Kidney Health:
What's the Connection?

4

Share Your Love with These Heart-Healthy Tips

Your sweetheart may have the key to your heart, but a proper diet and regular physical activity can be the key to a healthy heart. This Valentine's Day, indulge him or her with a heart-healthy gift or date.

- Quality time is one of the most meaningful gifts you can give. Bundle up and plan an outing such as sledding, ice skating or just going for a winter stroll around the neighborhood.
- Prepare a romantic, candlelit dinner at home using a heart-healthy recipe.
- Cooking at home together can be a fun "date." Give your sweetie the gift of a heart-healthy cooking class that you take together.
- Rekindle an old flame. Try preparing one of your old favorite foods in a new way. Love

bananas? Try broiling them for a special dessert to bring out the natural sweetness. Adding a bit of brown sugar and/or cinnamon adds a nice touch. Top with slivered almonds for a nutritional boost and a nice crunch.

— Source: American Heart Association



Caring for you and about you



Eye Health after 60 *Sleep and Your Eyes*

As we sleep, our eyes enjoy continuous lubrication. Also during sleep, the eyes clear out irritants such as dust, allergens or smoke that may have accumulated during the day.

Some research suggests that light-sensitive cells in the eye are important to our ability to regulate our wake-sleep cycles. This becomes more crucial as we age, when more people have problems with insomnia. While it's important that we protect our eyes from over-exposure to UV light, our eyes also need exposure to some natural light every day to help maintain normal sleep-wake cycles.

— Source: *American Academy of Ophthalmology*

Children's Dental Health *At What Age Do Children Start Losing Their Baby Teeth?*

A child's baby teeth (primary teeth) begin to loosen and fall out on their own to make room for permanent teeth at about age 6. Timing can vary, though, and girls generally lose baby teeth earlier than do boys. The last baby teeth typically fall out by age 12 or 13.

Baby teeth usually fall out in the order in which they erupted — first the two bottom front teeth (lower central incisors), followed by the two top front teeth (upper central incisors), the lateral incisors, first molars, canines, and second molars. If a child loses a baby tooth early as a result

of tooth decay or an accident, a permanent tooth may erupt early and potentially come in crooked due to limited space.

— Source: *Mayo Clinic*



Arthritis *It's More than One Disease*

Arthritis describes more than 100 diseases and conditions that affect the body's joints and surrounding tissue. Some signs of arthritis include aching, stiffness and swelling. If you are experiencing these signs and symptoms, talk to your doctor.

There are a number of things you can do to feel better. Participation in a self-management educational workshop can help teach you the skills and give you the confidence to manage arthritis symptoms on a day-to-day basis. Contact your local branch of the Arthritis Foundation to find classes in your area or ask your doctor to refer you to a class.

Regular physical activity for people with arthritis is generally safe, reduces pain and can help keep you doing many of the things you enjoy. Check with your doctor before beginning an exercise program.

A healthy body weight lowers the risk of developing arthritis and may stop the disease from getting worse. If you need to lose weight to reach this healthy range, talk with your doctor about a sensible weight-loss plan.

— Sources: *California Arthritis Partnership Program; Arthritis Foundation*



VITAMIN UPDATE

Why Do We Need Vitamin E?

Vitamin E is a fat-soluble nutrient found in many foods, such as oils, meat, eggs and leafy vegetables. It has antioxidant properties and is important for protection of cell membranes.

The amount of vitamin E you need each day depends on your age and diet. Average daily recommended intakes are listed below in milligrams (mg) and in International Units (IU). Package labels list the amount of vitamin E in foods and dietary supplements in IU.

Life Stage	Recommended Amount
Birth to 6 months	4 mg (6 IU)
Infants 7-12 months	5 mg (7.5 IU)
Children 1-3 years	6 mg (9 IU)
Children 4-8 years	7 mg (10.4 IU)
Children 9-13 years	11 mg (16.4 IU)
Teens 14-18 years	15 mg (22.4 IU)
Adults	15 mg (22.4 IU)
Pregnant teens and women	15 mg (22.4 IU)
Breastfeeding teens and women	19 mg (28.4 IU)

— Source: National Institutes of Health Office of Dietary Supplements

DID YOU KNOW?

When a tooth is exposed to acid frequently — for example, if you eat or drink often, especially foods or drinks containing sugar and starches — the repeated cycles of acid attacks cause the enamel to continue to lose minerals. A white spot may appear where minerals have been lost. This is a sign of early decay. Tooth decay can be stopped or reversed at this point. Enamel can repair itself by using minerals from saliva and fluoride from toothpaste or other sources.

But if the tooth decay process continues, more minerals are lost. Over time, the enamel is weakened and destroyed, forming a cavity. A cavity is permanent damage that a dentist has to repair with a filling.

— Source: National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research



Senior Health Older Adults and Alcohol

As we age, we may become more sensitive to alcohol's effects. One reason is that older people metabolize, or break down, alcohol more slowly than younger people, so alcohol stays in their bodies longer. Also, the amount of water in the body goes down with age. As a result, older adults have a higher percentage of alcohol in their blood than younger people after drinking the same amount of alcohol.

Aging lowers the body's tolerance for alcohol. This means that older adults can experience the effects of alcohol, such as slurred speech and lack of coordination, more readily than when they were younger. An older person can develop problems with alcohol even though his or her drinking habits have not changed.

If you have any concerns about your habits regarding alcohol, or the effects of alcohol on your health, talk with your doctor.

— Source: National Institutes of Health



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SUGAR AND KIDNEY HEALTH

What's the Connection?

Two new studies highlight the potential negative effects that soft drinks and sugar can have on kidney health. Results of these studies were presented at ASN Kidney Week 2013 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, GA.

In one study, researchers from Osaka University Graduate School of Medicine, in Japan, found that consuming at least two soft drinks per day is linked with proteinuria, or increased excretion of protein in the urine, which is a hallmark of kidney dysfunction. Among 3,579, 3,055, and 1,342 university-employee study participants with normal kidney function at the start of the study who reported that they drink zero, one, and two or more soft drinks per day, respectively, 301 (8.4%), 272 (8.9%) and 144 (10.7%) participants developed proteinuria

during a median of 2.9 years of follow-up, respectively.

Another study (this one on rats) from researchers at Case Western Reserve University, in Cleveland, found that moderate fructose intake increases the kidneys' sensitivity to angiotensin II, a protein that regulates salt balance. This leads to increased salt re-absorption by cells in the kidneys, a finding that might help explain why consumption of high-fructose corn syrup as a sweetener may contribute to diabetes, obesity, kidney failure and hypertension.

— Sources: Case Western Reserve University; Osaka University Graduate School of Medicine

Eye Health Tips

What Is a Dilated Eye Exam?

When it comes to common vision problems, some people don't realize they could see better with glasses or contact lenses. In addition, many common eye diseases such as glaucoma, diabetic eye disease and age-related macular degeneration often have no warning signs. A dilated eye exam is the only way to detect these diseases in their early stages.

During a comprehensive dilated eye exam, your eye-care professional places drops in your eyes to dilate, or widen, the pupil to allow more light to enter the eye the same way an open door lets more light into a dark room. This enables him or her to get a good look at the back of the eyes and examine them for any signs of damage or disease.

— Source: National Eye Institute

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