

total
HEALTH & wellness

For Members of
United Service
Association
For Health Care

FALL 2015

Kate On Her Own
Two Feet
Hudson

Kate Hudson's Energy,
Motivation Gets Us Moving

plus
**Are You Allergic to
Your Clothes?**

and
**Speaking with or
Without Words
in a Crisis**



United Service Association
For Health Care



[cover story]

Kate Hudson
inspires a healthy
lifestyle. **page 10**



- 3 Are You Allergic to Your Clothes?
- 4 For Happy, Healthy Feet Try These 4 Tips
- 5 It's a Guy Thing: Depression Affects Men, Too
- 6 5 Steps to Successful Meal Planning
- 8 The Aging Cycle of Your Bones and Joints
- 9 16 Ways to Reach Your Daily Dose of Motion
- 13 Speaking with or Without Words in a Crisis
- 14 Meet Two of Our 2015 USA+ Scholarship Winners!
- 16 6 Ways to Unlock Your Creative Potential at Work
- 17 The Skin You're In
- 18 Beware of These 8 Highly Contagious Diseases
- 20 5 Ways to Get Your Teen a Good Night's Sleep



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FALL 2015

Are You Allergic to Your Clothes?

There are many things that can set you scratching like crazy. That little, occasional itch could mean you have a case of contact dermatitis.

→ **FROM TIME TO TIME, EVERYONE PUTS ON AN ITEM OF CLOTHING THAT SETS THEM SCRATCHING**—maybe a hand-knitted scarf or a certain pair of pants. It could be contact dermatitis, which happens when your skin touches something that causes irritation and inflammation.

The Skinny on Contact Dermatitis

There are two kinds of contact dermatitis— allergic and irritant—but it can be difficult to tell them apart. That's because, even though they are usually caused by different things, the signs and symptoms are almost identical. They include:

- Cracking or peeling skin
- Dry, scaly rashes
- Itchy bumps or blisters
- Redness and swelling
- Skin that's warm to the touch

Allergic Contact Dermatitis

An allergic response happens when your body's immune system kicks in to fight off something it perceives as harmful. For some, materials such as wool, rubber, or latex can trigger such a response. These materials are commonly found in some articles of clothing, including:

- Bras
- Pants
- Shoes
- Gloves
- Shirts
- Waistbands

Irritant Contact Dermatitis

Some materials and chemicals can cause skin irritation without necessarily causing an allergic reaction. That's why irritant contact dermatitis is much more common than allergic contact dermatitis. It's most often caused by:

- Clothing dyes
- Laundry detergent
- Fabric softener
- Soap

Which Itch Is Which?

The only way to know for sure whether you have allergic or irritant contact dermatitis is to talk with a dermatologist. Be sure to give your dermatologist as much information as you can to help narrow down the cause of your skin irritation, including information about your health history, job, skin care products, pets, and even your hobbies.

Your dermatologist may do a patch test, applying small amounts of different possible irritants to your skin. In a few days, you can see which ones have caused a reaction.

Treating the Problem

The treatment for both allergic and irritant contact dermatitis is roughly the same. Once you've figured out what's causing your rash, you can do your best to avoid it.

After you stop wearing or using whatever has been causing the irritation, your skin should be clear of irritation in about one to three weeks. You can also talk with your dermatologist about antihistamines, moisturizers, or corticosteroid creams that can help relieve your symptoms. +



USA+ Wins Big with Total Health & Wellness in 2015!



Total Health & Wellness, a publication of United Service Association For Health Care, has won a Platinum Award in the Hermes

Creative Awards 2015 competition. The Hermes Creative Awards is an international competition for creative professionals involved in the concept, writing, and design of traditional materials and programs, and emerging technologies.

USA+ has won a Gold Award from the 32nd HMR Awards



for *Total Health & Wellness*. The Healthcare Advertising Awards is the oldest, largest, and most widely respected health care advertising awards competition, receiving nearly 4,000 entries each year.



Total Health & Wellness earned a Silver Award of Distinction in the 21st Annual Communicator Awards. More than 6,000 companies

submit their publications to The Communicator Awards each year. The program looks for publications that are using original, big ideas in marketing and communications.

For **Happy, Healthy Feet** Try These 4 Tips

Many people lose focus of an important part of their overall health—their feet! Podiatrists provided some valuable tips to keep your feet in tip-top shape.



→ **YOU CAN DO A FEW EASY THINGS TO PREVENT COMMON FOOT PROBLEMS.** Podiatrists offer the following advice to help you skip a trip to the doctor's office:

1 You shouldn't have to 'break in' shoes. Shoes should fit comfortably right out of the box. Don't assume that you'll break in a pair of kicks over time. Poorly fitting shoes can lead to corns, calluses, and other problems.

2 Realize when it's time to retire old shoes. If your feet ache, the solution may be as simple as buying new shoes. Shoes don't last forever, and wearing a pair past its lifespan can mean it doesn't offer as much support and cushion. Put the shoes on a flat surface. If they don't lie flat, the shoes have worn unevenly,

which could be contributing to overuse injuries or other pains.

3 Don't ignore ingrown toenails. Unless you actually remove the part of the nail that's growing into the skin, it won't go away. Sometimes cutting it yourself can make it worse. Getting expert treatment early on can prevent problems such as infections.

4 Everyday foot care can prevent toenail fungus. Toenail fungus is one of the most common reasons that people visit a podiatrist. Simple steps, however, can help prevent a fungal infection. First, be sure to trim nails straight across. Clean your feet every day, and dry them well any time you get them wet. If you notice a nail is getting thick, file down the top of the nail. +

GETTING A PEDICURE? PROTECT YOUR FEET

A visit to the nail salon for a pedicure can do wonders for your feet and toes. But if you're not careful, you can come home with more than manicured tootsies. Try these tips to protect your feet:

- Schedule an early morning appointment to be one of the first customers to use the foot baths.
- Bring your own utensils to ensure that pedicure utensils aren't contaminated, especially emery boards.
- Don't shave or wax between 24 to 48 hours before your appointment. It can cause tiny nicks or open pores in the skin, which can invite bacteria to enter your body.
- Ask for a pumice stone or foot file instead of a foot razor to remove dead skin or callouses.
- Have your technician gently push your cuticles back instead of cutting them to prevent infections.

It's a Guy Thing: Depression Affects Men, Too

If you feel sad, anxious, hopeless, or restless it's not just in your mind. But men are much less likely to seek help when these feelings arise.

→ **DEPRESSION AFFECTS 6 MILLION U.S. MEN EACH YEAR.** Both men and women can develop depression. However, men are much less likely to get help for it. Fact is, men and women experience depression differently. For instance, guys are more likely than women to suffer sleep problems when they're depressed.

Depression can also make getting through your day-to-day life feel like a struggle. You might not want to talk about your feelings or you don't realize your symptoms mean you're depressed. It's important to recognize symptoms of depression and seek help immediately, even when your instincts tell you to keep these feelings to yourself.

Signs to Watch For

One of the most important things you can do is identify signs of depression. These include:

- Feeling sad or a sense of emptiness
- Loss of interest in activities involving work, friends, family, and sex
- Fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering information
- Changes in appetite
- Thoughts of suicide
- Pain such as headaches or digestive issues
- Difficulty keeping up with your responsibilities

If you notice any of these signs, talk with your doctor. He or she can rule out other conditions that may cause depression-like symptoms or identify medications you're taking that may be impacting your mood.

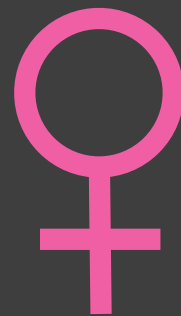
Help Is on the Way

The sooner you start treatment, the faster your symptoms will diminish. Some treatments, such as antidepressant medications, can take several weeks to work. In the meantime, here's what you can do to feel better:

- Don't be too hard on yourself.
- Break up tasks into smaller ones and do what you can.
- Spend time with people you enjoy being around.
- Talk about your feelings with your partner or a close friend or relative.
- Avoid making big decisions until you're feeling better. +

MIND the GENDER GAP when it comes to depression

In general, men are less likely to express typical signs of depression women often show. That's why doctors often fail to identify the illness and it can continue for a long time without being diagnosed. Here are some ways men and women experience the symptoms of depression differently:



ANXIETY

Increase in appetite
& weight gain

CRYING

Oversleeping



ANGER & AGGRESSION

IRRITABILITY

Self-medicating with
alcohol or drugs

Difficulty
Sleeping

5 Steps to Successful Meal Planning

One of the biggest hurdles of ditching the fast-food habit is time, right? All you have to do to cook healthy meals is use time-saving ideas to get food on your table quicker.

→ **FILLING SEVEN DAYS WITH HEALTHY, HOME-COOKED MEALS CAN FEEL INTIMIDATING.** But a little advance planning goes a long way in helping you pull off a weekly family meal plan. Here's how to make it happen for your household:

1 Shop your stock.

Take a day each week to organize. Peruse your cabinets to see what you already have on hand. Make note of staples you're low on—such as whole wheat pasta, unsalted canned vegetables, and frozen seafood—and keep an eye out for sales and special prices when you shop.

2 Decide on your dishes.

Consult the list of foods you already have, along with grocery store ads and your coupon file. Using those ingredients, create a list of five to seven easy-to-prepare, nutritious main courses.

Popular options include tacos, spaghetti, stir-fries, salads, oven-baked chicken, casseroles, and slow-cooker stews.

Mandarin Stir-Fry Beef



3 Work out your week.

Slot your meals into different days on the calendar. Keep your schedule in mind. Choose simple, tried-and-true favorites for busy nights. Save new menus or complicated recipes for less hectic times, such as weekends.

One time-saving step: Match up main ingredients and cook them in large batches. The same grilled chicken can star in salads on Tuesday and fajitas on Friday. Black beans or ground beef can fill Thursday's taco shells and Sunday's stew bowls.

4 Line up your list.

Write down any ingredients you'll need to purchase. Organize them by grocery store aisle.

Add a few basics that can give new life to leftovers. For instance, greens can turn leftover salmon into a seafood salad. Canned beans and tomatoes transform uneaten chops into pork chili.

5 Plan your prep work.

After you've shopped, consider what you can do to make the rest of the week go smoothly. For instance, wash, peel, and chop vegetables for a meal you're making tomorrow.

Also, consider making extra batches of entire dishes, such as pasta, soups, and stews. Freeze them in family-sized portions before or after cooking for an easy weeknight meal. +

Recipe Tip:

Using low-sodium or light soy sauce, plus low-sodium chicken or beef broth, goes a long way toward keeping the sodium levels lower in this recipe.

Health Fact:

Eating broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables has been linked to a lower risk for certain cancers, thanks to their high level of antioxidants.

Ingredients

8 oz. beef top sirloin or top round steak, cut into bite-sized strips
¼ cup tangerine juice (from 1 to 2 tangerines)
2 tbsp. hoisin or oyster sauce
1 tbsp. light soy sauce
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ cup low-sodium chicken or beef broth
1½ cups broccoli flowerets
⅓ cup sliced green onion
4 cups sliced Chinese or napa cabbage
1 can (8 oz.) sliced water chestnuts, drained
1 tangerine, peeled and segmented
2 cups cooked brown rice

Directions

1 Remove any excess fat from steak strips; place in shallow nonmetal dish. In small bowl, stir together tangerine juice, hoisin sauce, soy sauce, and garlic. Pour mixture over meat; toss to coat.

2 Cover and chill 30 minutes to several hours. Drain meat, reserving marinade.

3 In a wok or large skillet over high heat, place 3 tablespoons of broth. Stir-fry broccoli for three minutes. Remove from the wok. Add more broth if needed; stir-fry onion and cabbage for two minutes. Remove from the wok. Add more broth if needed; stir-fry water chestnuts and tangerine for one minute.

4 Add meat and cooked vegetables back to the wok, along with the reserved marinade. Toss well; cover and heat until meat is cooked. Serve with hot rice.

Yield: 4 servings

Per serving: Calories 320, Fat 9 g (Saturated fat 3.5 g), Cholesterol 45 mg, Sodium 480 mg, Total carbohydrate 43 g, Dietary fiber 5 g, Protein 17 g

The Aging Cycle of Your Bones and Joints

As we age, it's normal to notice small changes. A few more wrinkles. A little gray hair. But most of us don't realize the effect aging has on our skeletal systems.



→ **IT'S NATURAL FOR OUR BONES AND JOINTS TO CHANGE WITH AGE, JUST AS IT'S NORMAL TO PICK UP ON SIGNS OF AGING WHEN WE LOOK IN THE MIRROR.** Your skeletal system changes as you age as well. Learn how things change and how to boost your bone and joint health.

How Bones Change

Throughout life, your bones are constantly changing. The body naturally removes old bone and replaces it with new bone. When you are young, bone is replaced much more quickly than it is lost. This is when you are building stronger and denser bones. Around age 30, most people reach their peak bone mass.

After reaching peak bone mass, your body replaces about as much as it loses for a while. But around age 40, less bone is replaced. And this causes the bones to become thinner and weaker, increasing the risk for osteoporosis. For women, the most rapid bone loss occurs in the years after menopause.

How Joints Change

Your joints are also living, active tissues that can change over time. Loss of water content as well as normal wear and tear can take its toll on the joints, breaking down the top layer of cartilage. And this slippery tissue is important. It covers the ends of the bones in joints, helping them glide easily and absorb the shock of movement. When the cartilage wears away too much, osteoarthritis occurs.

Turning Back the Clock

Aging is inevitable. But there are many things you can do to boost your bone and joint health as you age, preventing or delaying problems. Try these tips:

- Ask your doctor whether medication may be affecting your skeleton and contributing to bone loss.
- Exercise regularly. Not only can physical activity keep your joints more flexible, it can minimize bone loss as well as help you maintain muscle mass, strengthening surrounding bone.
- Get enough calcium and vitamin D. These nutrients are essential for building and maintaining strong bones. Your doctor can tell you how much you need.
- Keep your weight at a normal level. Carrying too much weight can lead to increased wear and tear and greater risk for osteoarthritis. +

16 Ways to Reach Your Daily Dose of Motion

Moving more throughout the day benefits everyone, from couch potatoes to the athletic. Spending just a few minutes of your day being active makes a big difference.

→ **EXERCISE PROTECTS YOUR HEART, BOOSTS YOUR PRODUCTIVITY AND JOB PERFORMANCE, AND KEEPS YOU OUT OF THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE**—while leaving you happier, more energized, and less stressed. Physical activity can do all these things for you and more. All it takes is a few 10-minute sessions a day. Squeeze a little more action into your life, anywhere and anytime, with these ideas.

Move on the Job

- Walk down the hall to talk with your colleagues instead of calling or emailing.
- Take a brown bag to a park for lunch and enjoy a stroll after eating.
- Block time for exercise or a stretch like any other appointment. Honor it.
- Stash elastic resistance bands at your desk or locker. Use them for a quick workout.

Move at Home

- Tackle household chores with gusto. Squat when reaching a low shelf and stretch for high items.
- Do yard work, like gardening, raking, or push-mowing.
- Catch your favorite TV show at the gym or at home while on an exercise bike, doing stretches, or lifting weights.

- Cue up an energetic playlist and dance like no one's watching.

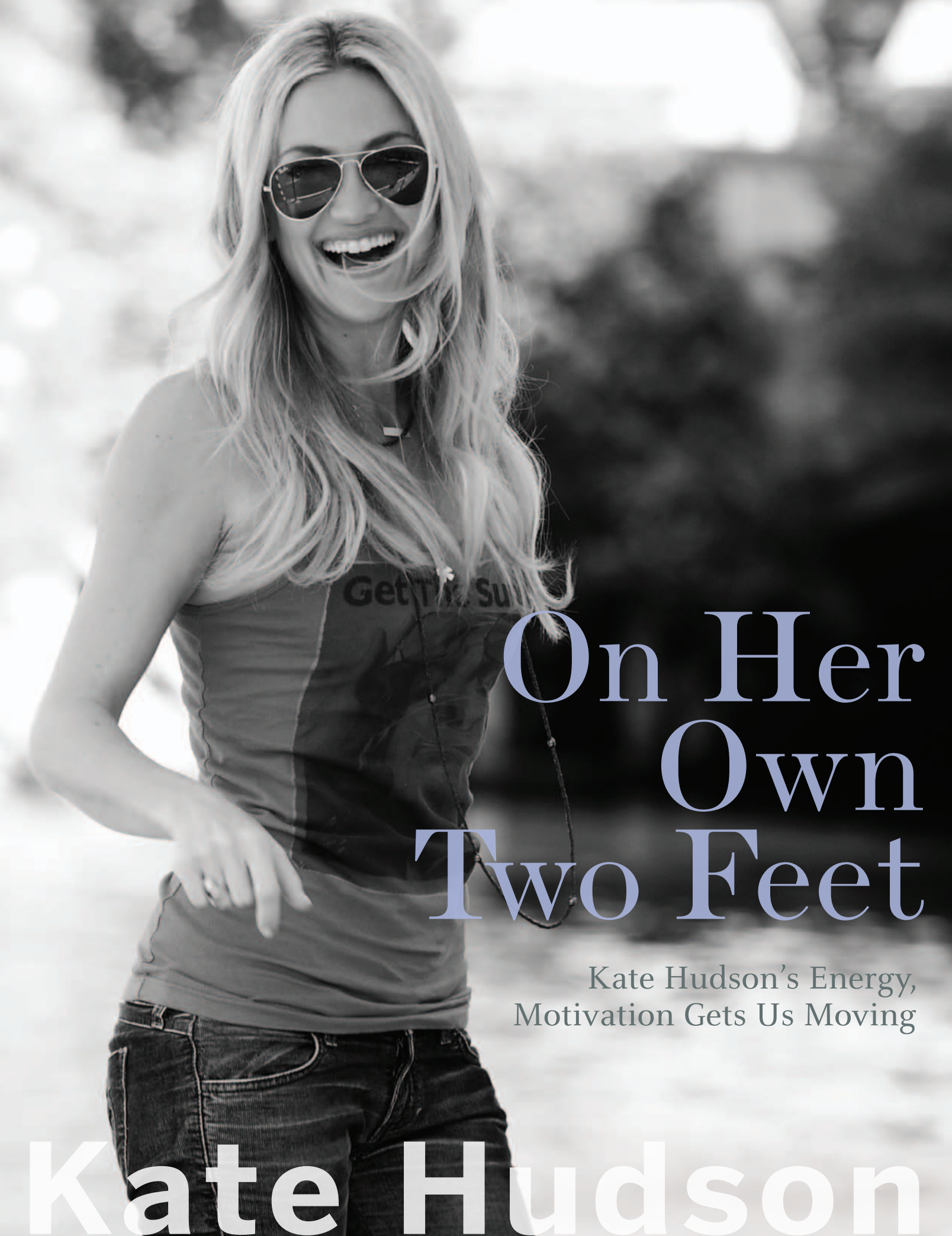
Move at Play

- Use exercise to bond with your buddies and colleagues. For instance, join a sports team or try a fitness class together.
- Walk the sidelines at your kids' soccer and softball games while you cheer them on.
- Visiting the lake? Take a swim, or try kayaking, rowing, or canoeing.
- Walk the golf course while you play instead of riding the cart.

Move on the Road

- Walk or bike to work. Or, take the train or bus and get off a stop early.
- If you travel for business and stay in a hotel with a gym or pool, use it. Otherwise, pack jump ropes and resistance bands, and get your sweat on in your room.
- Take a walk around the train station or airport while waiting for your departure.
- Really “run” your errands. Walk into the bank instead of hitting the drive-through. And carry each purchase immediately back to your car in the mall parking lot. +





On Her Own Two Feet

Kate Hudson's Energy,
Motivation Gets Us Moving

Kate Hudson

W

hen you first look at Kate Hudson—film star and daughter of Oscar-winner Goldie Hawn—it is easy to

think that her toned body and Hollywood success is merely a product of her genes. But the energetic, down-to-earth beauty has worked hard for who she is today—an award-winning actress and incredibly fit mother of two. Hudson's success can inspire us to reach our own goals.

Celebrity Upbringing

In 1979, Hudson was born to Hawn and biological father Bill Hudson, who was part of the musical group The Hudson Brothers. When Hudson was 3 years old, her mother met and fell in love with actor Kurt Russell. Russell moved in with Hawn and raised Hudson from an early age, earning him the title of “dad.” The couple was an obvious Hollywood success and Hudson was anxious to follow in their acting footsteps.

Hudson honed her talents and learned to stand on her own two feet. When Hudson broke into her first major acting role in 1996, guest-starring on FOX's drama *Party of Five*, it was clear she had learned to climb the ranks on her own. A few years later, Hudson appeared in her first film, *Desert Blue*.

A Rising Star

Once audiences, directors, and fellow actors experienced Hudson's talent and charm, her career began to rise. She starred in a few other movies including *200 Cigarettes* and *The Four Feathers* before wowing critics with her performance as groupie Penny Lane in the film *Almost Famous*. At just 21 years old, Hudson earned an Oscar nomination for the performance and brought home a Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actress.

Hudson's career took off. She kept busy on film after film, including: *You, Me and Dupree*; *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days*; *Raising Helen*; *The Skeleton Key*; *Fool's Gold*; and many more. In 2009, she let her passion fly, singing and dancing in the movie-musical *Nine*.

“It's like the most exhilarating, joyful thing in the world—I had so much fun,” Hudson recalls.

Personal Challenges

Although Hudson's career was soaring, her personal life had a

few starts and stops. In her early 20s, Hudson found love with Black Crowes lead singer Chris Robinson. They married in 2000 and had son Ryder Russell Robinson in 2004. However, the pair divorced a few years later.

In 2010, Hudson met Muse frontman Matthew Bellamy. They had a son together in 2011—Bingham Hawn Bellamy, nicknamed Bing. After a four-year engagement, the two broke it off.

Despite ups and downs, Hudson worked hard and added to her long list of feature films, including *Something Borrowed*, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *Good People*, and *Rock the Kasbah*, just to name a few. At the same time, her following as a healthy, active role model climbed.

Fitting in Fitness

Hudson is known for her enviable abs and ultra-fit figure, however, it doesn't mean they come easy. In fact, Hudson may be more like us than we think.

“I get really bored, so I'll do anything, try anything,” she says. That includes Pilates, yoga, running, aerobics classes, dancing—even workout DVDs. “Even if you are a mom, and you have a million things to do and the kids are at school, I love the DVDs. They make it hard to say you didn't have the time,” she says.

“My workout mantra is ‘Break a sweat every day.’ Even if it's just for 20 minutes. That said, sweating every day doesn't mean you have to go crazy.”

In addition to trying a variety of activities to keep things interesting, Hudson offers these keys to her fitness success: Do something every day and do it for the right reasons.

“My workout mantra is ‘Break a sweat every day.’ Even if it's just for 20 minutes. That said, sweating every day doesn't mean you have to go crazy. Even if I'm running with the kids, I feel like I've done something,” she says.

A Focus on Health

Just as her fitness routine sounds realistic, so do her tips on nutrition. “I make sure I eat well without depriving myself of the things that I love ... everything in moderation,” Hudson



Actress and co-founder of Fabletics, Kate Hudson (L) and actor Oliver Hudson attend the FL2 Launch on June 4, 2015 in New York City. (Dimitrios Kambouris/Getty Images)

explained to *SELF*. However, she also notes that eating healthy foods—not just the right proportion of calories—is important.

“I used to be able to eat whatever I wanted when I was younger, and then as I got older I saw that if I ate whatever I wanted, I wasn’t very healthy. Your body starts to change,” Hudson says. “It wasn’t about weight as much as it was about health.”

Inspiring Others

Beyond inspiring others, Hudson has put her beliefs into solid business practice. To help women feel and look their best while exercising, she cofounded and

launched Fabletics activewear in 2013—a premium fashion athletic wear brand. In 2015, she added a menswear collection to the line, called FL2.

“With Fabletics, we want to create a community ... a movement, to help you live fit and achieve your passions in life,” the company’s website states. It seems to be a motto that Hudson embraces.

We can learn from Hudson’s optimistic attitude, hard work, belief in herself, and ability to find ways to keep moving forward. These traits have helped form the woman she is today. And they inspire and motivate us to become our very best, too. No celebrity mom required. +

GIVING BACK

Kate Hudson has earned her place as a successful actress, businesswoman, and healthy role model on her own. But when it comes to helping others, she likes to make it a family affair.

Recently, Hudson was presented the Baby2Baby Giving Tree Award by her own mother, Goldie Hawn. The award was given to Hudson for her work with Baby2Baby, a nonprofit organization that provides low-income children in the Los Angeles area with diapers, clothing, and other basic necessities. A few months earlier, Hudson and her young son Ryder traveled to Mexico in support of the Starkey Hearing Foundation. Together, they helped provide hearing aids to those in need.

Hudson also has been involved with other charitable organizations—especially those that help children. For example, she joined with Michael Kors to raise awareness of the United Nations World Food Programme’s (WFP) 2015 Watch Hunger Stop campaign.

“As a mother, I can’t think of anything more important than raising a healthy and educated generation of children, and WFP’s School Meals Program is committed to exactly that,” says Hudson. “This is a cause that I’m eager to be a part of because I believe we can all make a real and significant difference.”

Speaking **with or Without Words** in a Crisis

Knowing how to communicate clearly in a crisis can help ensure you receive the potentially lifesaving medical care you need.

→ **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE.** But if you already have a condition like diabetes, asthma, or heart disease, you may run a greater risk. Prepare your friends and family, your documents, and yourself so you can act swiftly when minutes count.

Your Friends and Family

Talk through your health history and possible emergencies before something happens. Assign roles. For instance, one person can call 911. Another gets the emergency medications, such as glucagon for low blood sugar in diabetes or quick-relief drugs for an asthma attack.

Rehearse this plan as if you were doing a fire drill. Everyone should know where emergency supplies are kept and what to do with them.

Your Documents

Gather important materials. These include a list of your medications, your doctor's phone number, and key health records, such as your resting electrocardiogram (ECG) if you have heart disease. Keep copies at home and work, and consider carrying one with you.

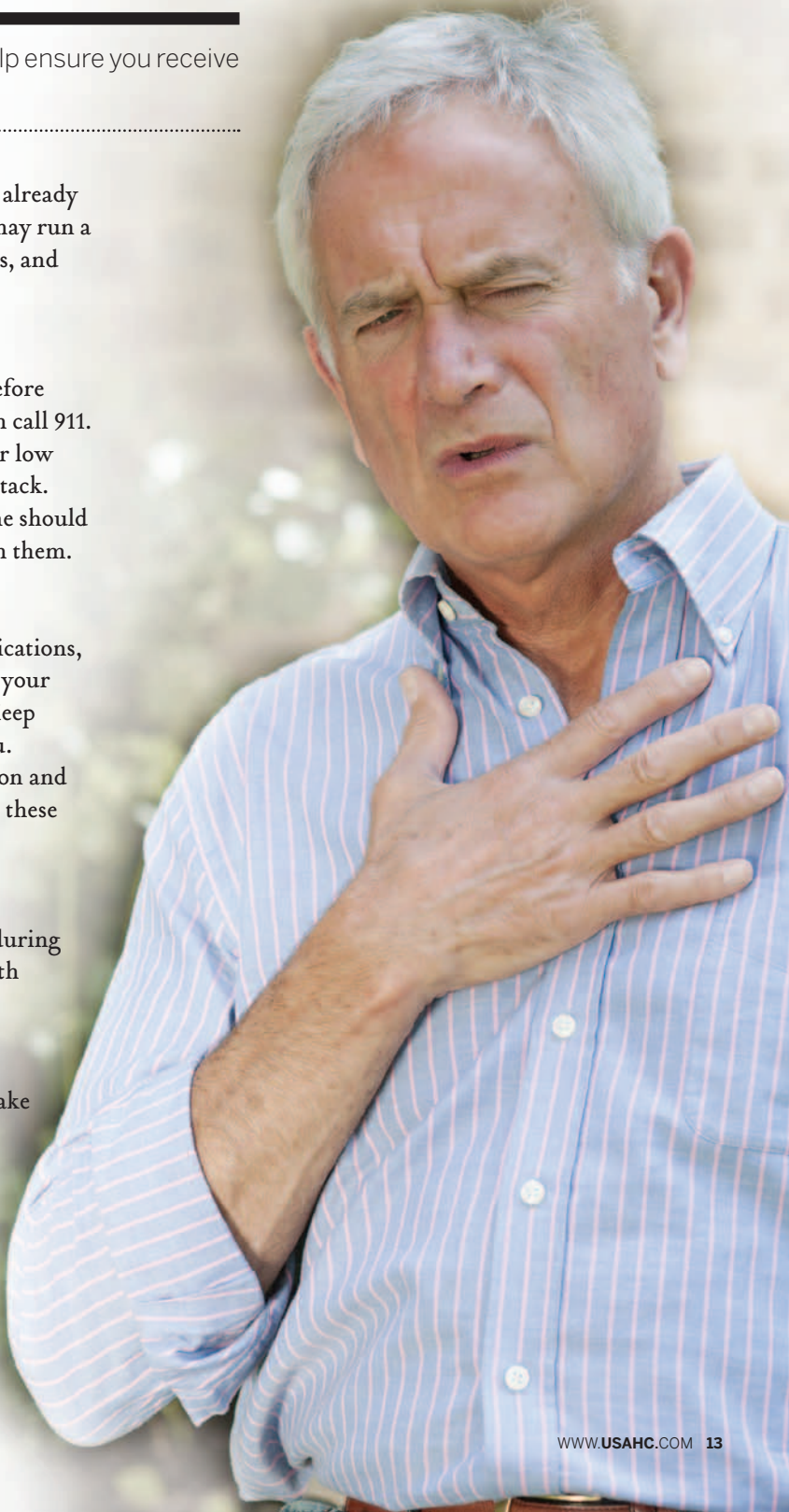
Also, wear a medical ID tag with details about your condition and who to contact in an emergency. If you can't speak in a crisis, these IDs convey critical information to health care personnel.

Yourself

No one knows your body as well as you do. If you can speak during an emergency, start by telling your doctor or emergency health responders your symptoms aren't normal. Say, "I'm worried something is seriously wrong."

Then, describe exactly what you feel and where you feel it. Explain how long you've had the symptoms and how they make you feel. Don't include your own ideas about what caused them. Give your doctor just the facts to help him or her make the best diagnosis.

Stay calm, but don't downplay your symptoms. If you're asked to rate your pain on a scale of zero to 10, do so as honestly as you can. Don't try to be tough or feel embarrassed about your condition—your honesty can save your life. +



Meet Two of Our 2015 USA+ Scholarship Winners!

With their personal strengths, accomplishments, and USA+ scholarships, these two young women have the power to build successful careers.



Eva Phelps

→ **A HIGH SCHOOL INTERNSHIP INSPIRED EVA PHELPS TO FOLLOW A PATH IN MEDICINE.** Before she started the internship at a local physical therapy office, the high school senior at Kickapoo High School in Springfield, Missouri, kept her expectations in check. “I was thinking I’d probably just take notes and watch,” she recalls. “But it turned out to be the complete opposite. I was able to work with and interact with patients, and I even learned about insurance, billing, and how a small business worked.”

From Internship to Career

That experience inspired Phelps to choose a major in exercise and movement science at Missouri State University, where she will start this fall. After completing four years of undergraduate work, she plans to enter a three-year physical therapy program. She someday hopes to open her own physical therapy clinic.

A \$5,000 scholarship from the United Service Association For Health Care (USA+) will help her reach these goals. “My mom [a USA+ member] told me about the scholarship, and she’s the first person I called when I won,” she says. “I was super excited. This will certainly ease the financial burden.”

Phelps is accustomed to achieving success through slow and steady progress. An accomplished athlete, she’s currently training to earn her third-degree black belt in mixed martial arts and tae kwon do, and she recently competed at the American Taekwondo Association’s 2015 World Expo. Phelps credits martial arts, which she began practicing at age 14, for helping her develop discipline and focus in other areas of her life, including schoolwork.

Building a Connection

Her athletic background also may have helped Phelps recognize and appreciate the physical challenges of the patients she helped during her internship. “I remember one lady who came in with plantar fasciitis [a painful swelling of a ligament in the foot] who could barely walk,” she says. “I was able to assist in her therapy, and it was great to see her heal over time and learn how to prevent this same injury from recurring.”

“That’s the most rewarding part of physical therapy—making connections with patients,” she adds. “It’s the reason I’m so passionate about entering this field.” +



Trixie Cruz

→ **TRIXIE CRUZ REALIZED FOLLOWING HER DREAMS TO HER PERFECT CAREER MEANT MELDING MATH AND MEDICINE.** While growing up in the Philippines, Maria Patricia “Trixie” Cruz didn’t necessarily enjoy the math drills that were a part of every school day. But when she moved to Las Vegas and began her freshman year of high school, she found that all of that practice had paid off. She was well-prepared to tackle high school math. More surprisingly, she found that she liked it. Her interest in math blossomed when she entered Southwest Career and Technical Academy, which prepares students for careers with rigorous coursework as well as hands-on projects and internships.

Applying Passion to Knowledge

“When I got to high school, I began to understand the applications of math and how formulas connect to each other,” Cruz says. She also realized that her proficiency with numbers might lay the groundwork for a career in the medical field.

“My mother was a pediatrician in the Philippines [she’s now a nurse practitioner in a pediatrics office],

and I used to look through her medical textbooks when I visited her office,” she says. “I’ve always been interested in how the human body works and how medicines affect the body.” As a high school student, Cruz came to realize that the medical field was much broader than she originally thought. She is most interested in pharmacy and physical therapy.

What the Future Holds

Cruz is not sure where her career will eventually land. For now, she plans to pursue a degree in biochemistry at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas, and a \$5,000 scholarship from USA+ will help pave her path.

“I’m really grateful for this scholarship,” she says. “My parents are already working so hard, and this money will help me take on some more of that financial responsibility.”

Even though she’s already been through some major life changes, she considers the start of her college career the biggest one yet. “It’s going to be a challenge, but I’m used to challenges,” she says. “I’m very excited and can’t wait to get started.” +

USA+ SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM HELPS STUDENTS REALIZE EDUCATIONAL GOALS

United Service Association For Health Care (USA+) developed a program that provides scholarships to outstanding high school seniors who show promise of continued academic performance. This program is only available to dependent children and grandchildren of USA+ members. USA+ awards up to five scholarships each academic school year, totaling \$5,000 each.

Members who have maintained good standing for at least six consecutive months are eligible to submit a scholarship application on behalf of their dependent children and grandchildren.

Scholarship Criteria

The recipient must be a full-time student (minimum of 12 hours per semester). The selection criteria include the following:

- Academic achievement, including grades, rank in class, standardized test scores, and achievement test scores
- Minimum GPA of 3.0
- Community/extracurricular involvement
- Leadership
- Participation in specific activities
- Awards and recognition
- Work history
- Personal or family attributes
- Field of study must be related to health care, such as nursing, radiology, school of medicine, nuclear medicine, etc.

To view a PDF with a full list of criteria, eligibility, and requirements, visit www.usahc.com/advocacy.aspx.

Obtaining an Application

Applications are available year-round and can be obtained by contacting USA+ at 800-872-1187. +

6 Ways to Unlock Your Creative Potential at Work

Every day we're faced with challenges that can either become sticking points or launching pads—whether we don a business suit or an artist's apron.



→ **NEXT TIME YOU'RE REACHING FOR A NEW SOLUTION TO AN OLD PROBLEM, TRY A FEW OF THESE IDEAS.** One of these six concepts just might provide the jolt of energy you need to leap over the status quo and change the game.

1 Adjust your perspective. Instead of seeing problems as challenges, view them as opportunities for fresh thinking. If you make mistakes, congratulate yourself for finding what didn't work and try again.

2 Gather different views. We often seek out the person with the most experience, but creativity isn't limited to "experts." In fact, more creative solutions tend to come from teams that include people from across an organization.

3 Appreciate limitations. Recent research shows that creative sparks actually tend to burn brighter when thinkers are faced with roadblocks (as opposed to "the sky's the limit" brainstorming).

4 Get imaginative. To engage your creative side, imagine your problem through another's eyes. How would it look if you were a customer? Your boss?

5 Kindly disagree. Organizations that institute guidelines for healthy disagreement are some of the most creative because conflict signals that new ideas are being presented. Just make sure any feedback you give at work (or home) focuses on the task, not the person.

6 Have fun. Challenge the belief that you can have fun only after work. Overcoming this old thought may be the most important key to approaching work in new ways and unlocking your creative potential. +

MANAGING AFTER-HOUR COMMUNICATIONS

Using electronics to check in with work after business hours is the new normal. With email, cellphones, and text messages, it's easier than ever to stay in touch with the office at night and on weekends. But that's not always positive for workers.

Setting boundaries is one of the best ways to bust work-related stress. Try these tips to keep work messages from interfering with your personal life:

- Ask the sender for a deadline. You might not need to tackle the problem right away.
- Set your own rules. For example, check work email only after dinner with your family.
- Talk with your boss and coworkers to create group guidelines for after-work communications.

The **Skin** You're In

It's inevitable—as you age, so does your skin. Making lifestyle changes can keep those signs of aging from being so noticeable.

→ **SKIN LOSES FAT, BECOMES THINNER, AND MAY NOT HEAL AS QUICKLY AS YOU AGE, BUT EXACTLY HOW YOUR SKIN AGES DEPENDS ON A FEW FACTORS**, like your genes, the environment, and your lifestyle choices. While you can't change your genes, you can make other choices that help protect your skin from these common signs of aging.

Wrinkles

When your skin begins to lose the elasticity of youth, it starts to wrinkle. Smoking and ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun or tanning beds can make the skin wrinkle more. You can limit wrinkles by protecting your skin from UV rays and not smoking.

Dry Skin

With age, many people find that their skin becomes dry, rough, scaly, or itchy. Sun exposure, stress, smoking, dry air, and dehydration can make dry skin worse. Relieve dry skin by applying moisturizer daily and using warm water for showers and baths instead of hot water.

Age Spots

Brown, flat spots, called age spots or liver spots, can appear on your skin as you age. They are often caused by years of sun exposure. Help prevent age spots by using sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher whenever you're in the sun.

Bruises

Older skin often bruises more easily. You may notice bruises and not know how you got them. Bruises and cuts may also take longer to heal. If you notice a lot of bruising, or have bruises on areas of your body that are covered by clothing, talk with your doctor.

Skin Cancer

Skin cancer doesn't happen to everyone as they age, but it is a concern. You can protect your skin from cancer—and from the other signs of aging—by using sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher every day.

Protect Your Skin

Even if you've already noticed some signs of aging, there are steps you can take to keep your skin healthy. Using sunscreen and moisturizer every day are the most important steps. But exercising, eating a well-balanced diet, and quitting smoking can also lend your skin a more youthful appearance. Cutting back on alcohol can also help, as alcohol tends to dry out the skin. +



Beware of These 8 Highly Contagious Diseases

News stories of specific outbreaks of disease appear from season to season, but there are very contagious threats to your health around all the time.

→ **CONTAGIOUS DISEASES SUCH AS EBOLA AND BIRD FLU FREQUENTLY MAKE HEADLINES.** As scary as they seem, there are other illnesses you're more likely to encounter. What are they, and how can you keep yourself safe? Here's what you need to know about eight highly contagious diseases.

1 Norovirus

Often referred to as "food poisoning" or "stomach flu," the virus causes inflammation in your gut, resulting in pain, nausea, diarrhea, or vomiting. You can become infected if you come into contact with stool or vomit from an infected person or consume food or drinks that are contaminated with the virus. Always wash your hands with soap and water after using the bathroom and before preparing or handling food.

2 Influenza

Known simply as "the flu," the influenza virus causes symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and fatigue. The flu virus spreads through droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze. You can also get sick by touching a surface that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, eyes, or nose. The best ways to prevent it are getting a flu vaccine each year, washing your hands often, and avoiding touching your face.

3 Meningitis

Meningitis causes inflammation of the protective membranes around the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light, and confusion. Meningitis is transferred through saliva or mucus, such as kissing or sharing a utensil. Several kinds of bacteria may be responsible for meningitis, and antibiotics can help treat it. Meningitis can be very serious, so visit your doctor as soon as you notice symptoms.

4 Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD)

HFMD is a contagious illness caused by several different viruses. Symptoms progress from fever and sore throat, to painful mouth sores, to a skin rash on the hands, feet, knees, elbows, and buttocks. You can catch HFMD by coming into contact with an infected person's saliva, stool, or blister fluid, or by touching objects that have the virus on them. Although there's no specific treatment, over-the-counter medications can relieve symptoms such as pain and fever.

5 Pertussis

Also known as whooping cough, it's a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by the bacterium *Bordetella pertussis*. The aptly named condition causes uncontrollable coughing fits that

result in a "whooping" sound and make it difficult to breathe. It's most common in infants and can be deadly, especially in babies younger than age 1. The best way to prevent pertussis is by getting immunized.

6 Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

STIs are passed through sexual contact. There are many different types of STIs including chlamydia, genital herpes, gonorrhea, hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS, syphilis, and others. STIs can lead to cancer, infertility, pregnancy complications, infections in other parts of the body, and even death. Using condoms for all types of sexual contact can protect you against STIs.

7 MRSA

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is a type of bacterial infection that's resistant to several antibiotics. MRSA causes skin infections that appear as a bump or an irritated area. It may be red, swollen, painful, and warm. You may also have a fever. You can catch MRSA by coming into contact with pus from infected wounds, so wash your hands often, especially if someone in your household is infected. Contact your doctor if you think you may have MRSA.

8 Tuberculosis (TB)

TB is less common in the U.S than in other parts of the world, but is highly contagious. TB is caused by a bacterium that attacks the lungs and causes coughing, chest pain, and other symptoms. Untreated, it can be deadly. TB bacteria is released into the air when a person with TB coughs, sneezes, or speaks. You can become infected simply by breathing in contaminated air. Contact your doctor about testing and treatment if you've been exposed. +

VACCINES—NOT JUST FOR KIDS!

There are many reasons why adults need to be vaccinated, too. If you didn't receive a certain vaccine as a child, you should still get the vaccine as an adult. In some cases, your immunity from a childhood vaccine can fade over time, so a booster may be necessary. And some vaccines are meant to be given regularly. For example, you should get the flu shot annually.

Talk with your doctor to find out which vaccines you might need based on your risk factors and medical history. The list of recommended vaccines includes:

- Hepatitis A and B
- Human papillomavirus (HPV)
- Influenza
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
- Meningococcal
- Pneumococcal
- Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Td/Tdap)
- Varicella (the chickenpox vaccine)
- Zoster (shingles)



Articles in this magazine are written by professional journalists or physicians who strive to present reliable, up-to-date health information. Our articles are reviewed by medical professionals for accuracy and appropriateness. No magazine, however, can replace the care and advice of medical professionals, and readers are cautioned to seek such help for personal problems.

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5 Ways to Get Your Teen a Good Night's Sleep

Does your high-schooler seem to sleep the whole weekend away? Fewer than one in 10 teens get the advised amount of shut-eye on school nights.

POOR SLEEP CAN LEAD TO POOR HEALTH AMONG OTHER ISSUES. Some contributing factors—like early school start times—lie beyond your control. Still, there are steps you can take to add to your teens' Z-count. And beyond quantity, helping your child score good quality sleep also has benefits, new reports suggest.

Poor Sleep Nothing to Snooze At

Government researchers have found that most high-schoolers are falling far short of the expert-recommended nine or more hours of sleep per night, with less than 10 percent getting appropriate amounts of shut-eye. The effects of sleep deprivation linger long after the alarm clock rings. New memories form while teens slumber, so schoolwork and learning seem harder on

less rest. Lack of sleep also contributes to poor food choices, obesity, accidents, depression, high blood pressure, and an impaired immune system. The result? Teens are left literally sick and tired.

Recharging Teens' Batteries

Blame biology, in part. Hormones push teens' sleep-wake cycles later. They naturally turn into night owls and late risers once puberty strikes.

Still, there's a lot parents can do to help their kids hit the hay. Take these steps to ensure your teen sleeps enough, and well.

1 Suppress screen time. The average adolescent uses four different electronic devices after 9 p.m. But bright lights and stimulating content disrupt rest. Ban TV from your teen's bedroom,

and take the cellphone away, too—many teens may spend the night texting or waiting for a response.

2 Avoid all-nighters. Instead, encourage your student to do a little schoolwork each evening.

3 Nap wisely. Encourage your teen to limit midday sleep to an hour or less, and to do so early in the day.

4 Control caffeine. Discuss cutting back on coffee, soda, and chocolate, especially in the afternoon.

5 Encourage exercise. Regular sweat sessions make sleep more restful.

Talk with your child's doctor if your teen still has trouble nodding off, or seems excessively sleepy during the day. +

