

A portrait of Tom Hanks, smiling, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie. His hands are clasped in front of him. The background is a blurred red carpet event.

total **HEALTH** & *wellness*

For Members of
United Service
Association
For Health Care

FALL 2020

Tom Hanks

Inspiring the
Extraordinary

**Brush for
Better Brain
Health**

**The Power
of Purpose**

USA
United Service Association
For Health Care



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Tom Hanks
Inspiring the
Extraordinary
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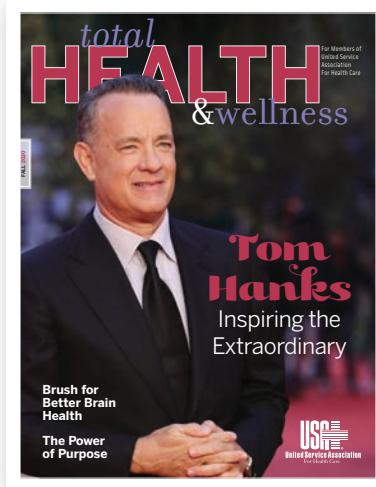
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As of press time for this issue, much is still unknown about the role the coronavirus pandemic will continue to play this fall. We hope whatever the current situation, these articles will help you be the healthiest you now and in the future. For as long as needed, please follow all local and national guidance for staying safe during the coronavirus pandemic.



TOTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

Executive Director: M. Cranon

Director of Operations: T. Barton

Director of Operations: R. Davis

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For more information, please contact:

United Service Association
For Health Care
P.O. Box 200905
Arlington, TX 76006-0095
800-USA-1187

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FALL 2020

Watch Out for Tricky Halloween Treats

Ghosts and ghouls, step aside. Nothing is scarier than the Nutrition Facts on Halloween candy. Those miniature packages look tiny, but the calories add up fast. Just three fun-size Snickers bars have 240 calories, as does (gulp!) one fun-size Skittles pack. Expect to jog for about 22 minutes to escape from that horror!



Fight Off Foodborne Illness

Getting sick from your food isn't just unpleasant. It can be dangerous. To make sure you stay healthy, learn how to properly handle, prep, and store food, and keep your eye on recalls. You can do both by visiting the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service website at www.fsis.usda.gov.

Test Your Smoke Detector

You know it's important to have smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors at home. But do you know when to test them? Or replace the batteries? According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, both should be tested once a month. Just push the test button. Batteries should be replaced once a year. An easy way to remember when to change your batteries is to do it when you change your clocks at the end of daylight saving time. This year, that falls on Sunday, November 1. You can also schedule reminders on your phone or calendar. It may just save your life!



Get Physical When You Watch TV

Looking for ways to get fitness into your day at home? Try working out while watching your favorite TV show. Stretching, yoga, lifting weights, and jogging in place are all good choices to add exercise to your screen time. Or if you have a stationary bike or treadmill, set it up in front of your TV.



Make Time for Your Annual Flu Vaccine

A yearly flu vaccine is the best way to protect against the flu, and now is the time to do it. The CDC recommends that almost everyone six months and older should get vaccinated—before the end of October, if possible. You should also ask your provider about other vaccinations you may need based on your risk factors. For example, getting a pneumonia vaccine is recommended for many adults ages 65 years and older, as well as younger people who smoke or have certain health conditions. You can also try the CDC's interactive vaccine website at www2.cdc.gov/nip/adultimmsched. Just answer a few questions for personalized recommendations.



Save Your Sight by Visiting the Eye Doctor



Age-related macular degeneration, or AMD, isn't typically a hot topic of discussion. But maybe it should be. After all, AMD is a leading cause of vision loss in men and women ages 50 and older.

→ **HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW—**
and why an appointment with your eye doctor can make all the difference.

What Is AMD?

In healthy eyes, central vision is sharp. This enables us to see fine details when looking straight ahead. We rely on our central vision to recognize faces, drive safely, and do close-up activities, like cooking and reading. AMD blurs your central vision and may make things look less bright. Over time, the condition can progress, increasing the size of the blurry area and causing blank spots.

There are two types of AMD: dry and wet. Dry AMD typically causes vision loss at a slower rate than wet AMD.

Am I At Risk?

You have a higher risk of developing AMD if you:

- Are age 50 or older
- Are overweight
- Have a family member with AMD
- Have high blood pressure, heart disease, or high cholesterol
- Smoke cigarettes

How Is It Treated?

While there is no current treatment for dry AMD, the most common treatment for wet AMD is monthly injections. With these shots, your eye doctor delivers medicine directly into the eye to stop further vision loss. Even though this may sound like an uncomfortable experience, research shows it's well worth it.

In fact, one recent study found that delaying or skipping visits can negatively impact your vision. Compared with patients who saw their providers every four weeks, those who allowed 36 to 60 days between appointments read 6.1 fewer letters on the eye chart. And those who waited 60 or more days between visits identified 12.5 fewer letters.

The bottom line? Regular appointments with your eye doctor can help preserve your vision for years to come. If you're due for a visit, set your sights on making an appointment today. +

HELP WITH KEEPING AN EYE ON YOUR HEALTH

Most United Service Association For Health Care (USA+) memberships include an annual eye exam for each family member at no additional cost when the exam is received from a participating provider.

An eye exam can give physicians an extraordinary look at your overall health. Diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol are all diseases that eye care specialists can detect from an eye exam. If you have not had an eye exam this year, we encourage you to schedule one soon.

Your USA+ membership includes access to more than 37,000 participating providers nationwide, and we have a provider within 10 miles of the homes of 90 percent of the United States population.

If you need assistance in locating a participating provider in your area, just call our Member Services Department at 800-872-1187 or, if you prefer, log on to the Member's Only section of our website at www.usahc.com.

Don't Forget Dilated Eye Exams Dilated eye exams are the only way to identify many problems, like AMD, early—before they cause vision loss. Talk with your eye doctor about how often to have your eyes checked. Then, stick to the plan.

Brush for Better Brain Health

Good oral health not only keeps your breath minty fresh and your teeth pearly white, but also helps protect your brain—specifically, your memories.

→ **ACCORDING TO RECENT RESEARCH,** there's a relationship between gum disease and your chances of developing Alzheimer's disease.

What the Science Says

Porphyromonas gingivalis (a fancy name for a specific type of bacteria) is the main culprit responsible for gum disease. However, it can affect more than just your mouth. Scientists also find this bacteria in the brains of people with Alzheimer's—suggesting that it may contribute to the disease's development.

Other research further solidifies this connection. In one study, researchers analyzed patients diagnosed with chronic periodontitis (CP)—a type of gum disease—and compared them with patients without CP. The results showed that after 10 years, those with CP had more than one and a half times the risk for Alzheimer's disease.

To Brush, or Not to Brush?

It can be easy to justify skipping oral care at the end of the day. After all, your pillow is oh-so comfy and your bathroom is oh-so far away! But no matter how old

you are—or how tired—brushing and flossing need to be at the top of your to-do list. After all, poor brushing and flossing habits let plaque build up on your teeth and can lead to gum disease.

Symptoms of gum disease include:

- Tender, swollen, or bleeding gums
- Loose teeth
- Painful chewing

If you experience any of these symptoms, be sure to tell your dentist. Your dentist can check whether you have gum disease and recommend treatment.

Taking Care of Your Teeth

When it comes to your health, brushing is a no-brainer (and a brain-helper!). Follow these tips to promote a lifetime of beautiful smiles and lasting memories:

- Brush your teeth twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss once a day. Rinse your mouth with water after you floss.
- Visit your dentist once or twice a year for a checkup and cleaning.
- Avoid sugary foods, sweetened drinks, and tobacco. +

TEST YOUR SAVVY ON ... BRUSHING YOUR TEETH

- 1 You should brush your teeth once a day with a soft-bristled brush.**
☐ True ☐ False
- 2 To get the best results, hold your toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to your gums.**
☐ True ☐ False
- 3 You don't need to brush your tongue.**
☐ True ☐ False
- 4 Most Americans don't spend nearly long enough brushing their teeth.**
☐ True ☐ False

Answers

- 1. False. You should brush twice a day. Use an American Dental Association (ADA)–approved fluoride toothpaste, too. Brushing twice daily is key to good oral health.**
- 2. True. Then brush the outer, inside, and chewing surfaces of all teeth, the ADA says. Tilt the brush vertically and make several small up-and-down strokes on the back of your front teeth.**
- 3. False. You should brush your tongue—it helps banish bacteria and bad breath.**
- 4. True. Aim for at least two minutes.**





Stock Up Your Pantry with Healthy Foods That Last

Grocery shopping may be something you once took for granted. But it's been a little more complicated since the coronavirus started spreading. It's important now to shop according to two goals. First, to minimize shopping time by getting everything you'll need in as few trips as possible. And second, to maximize nutrition by choosing healthy foods that you'll actually eat.

→ **THE BEST WAY TO ACHIEVE BOTH OBJECTIVES IS BY CREATING A WELL-THOUGHT-OUT SHOPPING LIST.** In addition to some fresh foods, include foods with a long shelf life. Panic buying and hoarding aren't necessary. But having a several-day supply on hand may provide some peace of mind.

Making Smart Food Choices

Focus on choosing nutrient-rich foods. No food or nutrient can prevent or treat the coronavirus. However, a healthy, balanced diet provides several nutrients that may help support your immune system when eaten on a regular basis. For example:

- **Protein** plays a role in the immune system's healing and recovery processes. Sources include fish, lean meat, poultry, beans, and nuts.
- **Vitamin A** helps regulate the immune system. Sources include sweet potatoes, carrots, spinach, and apricots.
- **Zinc** helps the immune system function normally. Sources include fish, poultry, beans, and whole grains.

Creating Your Shopping List

Make sure to include some long-lasting staples on your list. Here are a few suggestions (look for brands with low-salt options):

- Canned tuna, salmon, and sardines
- Canned chicken
- Peanut butter
- Dried beans, peas, and lentils
- Brown rice
- Whole-grain cereal
- Whole-grain pasta
- Jars of pasta sauce
- Cans or shelf-stable cartons of soup and broth
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Dried fruit
- Ultra-pasteurized, shelf-stable milk

One last tip: Some supermarkets may still have designated shopping times for older adults. Others may have shortened store hours if the coronavirus is still active in your community. Call ahead to check on any changes. +



GETTING GROCERIES WITHOUT LEAVING HOME

To avoid going out, consider ordering your groceries online from:

- Your supermarket's website, asking a relative or friend to pick them up
- Your supermarket's website, requesting delivery to your home
- A home delivery company, such as Amazon Fresh or Instacart

If you are concerned about the coronavirus, ask for contactless delivery. Most delivery services are happy to leave groceries by your door rather than handing them to you directly. Also ask about delivery fees.

Be aware that some items may be out of stock and deliveries may be delayed. Don't wait until the last minute to order.

What if you're running low on food and the supermarket shelves are temporarily bare? Call 211 and ask about resources that can help.

Oatmeal Applesauce Bread



If you're in a baking mood, this oatmeal applesauce bread is sure to hit the spot! Bonus: You probably already have most of the ingredients in your pantry.

Ingredients

Olive oil spray (or oil)	1 cup unsweetened applesauce
1 tsp. flour for pan	(or 1 cup mashed bananas, ½ to ¾ cup milk, or ½ to ¾ cup water)*
1 ½ cups quick oats	¾ cup water
1 ½ cups all-purpose flour	(or whole wheat flour)
1 tsp. baking soda	4 tbsp. honey (or maple syrup, brown sugar, sorghum, or molasses)
½ tsp. cinnamon	1 tbsp. canola oil (or vegetable oil)
	Optional: ⅛ tsp. salt and ½ tsp. sugar

Directions

- 1 Preheat oven to 475 degrees. Spray loaf pan with olive oil spray or wipe with oil, sprinkle with flour to coat, and set aside.
- 2 In a large bowl, stir oats, flour, baking soda, and cinnamon together.
- 3 Add applesauce, water, honey, and oil to the oat mixture. Stir until well-combined, then pour into prepared pan. Smooth top of batter so that it's even. If desired, sprinkle salt and sugar on top.
- 4 Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, checking at 30 minutes to see whether it's done. It should be browned on top, but not burned, and moist in the middle. Let cool for about one hour before removing from loaf pan, then finish cooling on a wire rack. To prevent crumbling, slice the bread when it's completely cooled.

Per Serving

Serves eight; serving size is one slice. Each serving provides: 190 calories, 3.5 g fat (0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 160 mg sodium, 39 g total carbohydrate, 4 g dietary fiber, 12 g sugars, 5 g protein.

*These substitutions will alter the calories and nutrients per serving.

Keep Up with COPD Care

People with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) aren't more likely to contract contagious viruses like the coronavirus. However, people who have COPD often have worse outcomes when they get certain respiratory illnesses, such as COVID-19 and the flu.



→ THAT'S WHY IT'S CRUCIAL TO TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT INFECTIONS IF YOU ARE LIVING WITH COPD.

Guard Against Viruses

Whether or not you have COPD, get a flu shot every year. In addition, follow the recommended safety measures to protect yourself from the coronavirus and other viruses:

- Wash your hands often, and avoid touching your face.
- Practice social distancing. Put distance between yourself and others.
- Stay home as much as possible.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as tables, doorknobs, light switches, phones, keyboards, and faucets.

Manage COPD Symptoms

Stay in regular touch with your health care provider and continue your action plan to manage your breathing. Although it isn't curable, COPD is treatable. However, treatment can be complicated and requires consistent follow-up care.

- **Keep taking your medications.** Your provider tailors medications and therapy just for you. Don't ignore follow-up appointments to monitor your meds. It's essential that your provider reviews your treatment plan, assesses how well it's working, and adjusts it as needed.
- **Seek continuing education and support.** Many people with COPD can manage their conditions better when they receive ongoing support from their health care providers, smoking-cessation help, and regular follow-up assessments.
- **Attend pulmonary rehab, if possible.** A pulmonary rehabilitation program can help improve your physical and psychological condition. Many programs teach people how to exercise, eat healthy, breathe better, save energy, and manage stress.

Caring for yourself to manage a chronic illness like COPD is vital. With the right care and education from your provider, you can control your disease and lessen your chances for hospitalization—while improving your quality of life. +

Assess Your Breast Cancer Risk Factors



Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among American women. Are you at risk? Here are some factors to consider.

→ **ALTHOUGH BREAST CANCER DEATH RATES HAVE DECLINED SINCE 1989**, the American Cancer Society (ACS) estimates that about 268,000 new cases of invasive breast cancer will still be diagnosed this year, and more than 41,000 women will die as a result.

Things That Increase Your Risk

Some breast cancer risk factors cannot be controlled. According to the ACS, these include age, personal or family history of breast cancer, inheriting certain genes, certain types of abnormal breast changes, and dense breast tissue.

A woman's menstrual and reproductive histories also affect risk. Having your first menstrual period before the age of 12 or reaching menopause after age 55 increases the risk, as does never having children or having children after the age of 30. (Having a baby before the age of 20, though, decreases the risk.)

Certain therapies can also increase your breast cancer risk. These include radiation therapy to the chest for cancer treatment, as well as certain menopausal hormone therapies. Taking both estrogen and progesterone for more than five years increases the risk for breast cancer. However, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) does note that for postmenopausal women who have had a hysterectomy, estrogen-only hormone therapy may decrease the risk for breast cancer. Some birth control pills can also raise the risk for breast cancer.

Things That Lower Your Risk

There are a number of lifestyle factors that can lower your breast cancer risk. These include:

- **Breastfeeding:** Less exposure of breast tissue to estrogen is a protective factor for breast cancer, and estrogen levels may remain lower while a woman is breastfeeding.
- **Maintaining a healthy weight after menopause:** Before menopause, your ovaries produce most of your estrogen, with fat tissue contributing a little more. After menopause, however, most of a woman's estrogen comes from fat tissue—so having more fat tissue can increase your chances of getting breast cancer by raising your estrogen levels.
- **Getting plenty of physical activity:** According to the NCI, exercising four or more hours a week helps lower breast

cancer risk. The preventive impact may be greatest in premenopausal women of normal or low weight, but regular exercise can also help you avoid being overweight or obese after menopause.

- **Reducing alcohol intake:** Women who consume one alcoholic drink a day have a seven to 10 percent increase in risk compared with nondrinkers, while women who have two to three drinks a day have about a 20 percent higher risk than nondrinkers.

If you carry faulty genes—for example, the BRCA1 gene—another preventive measure is to undergo a double mastectomy (the removal of both breasts). But you should consider this only after having a cancer risk assessment and counseling about the different ways to prevent breast cancer. +

THE MAMMOGRAM DEBATE

When it comes to getting mammograms, there is no current consensus on when screenings should begin or be repeated. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends women at average risk for breast cancer start getting mammograms at age 50, and then only once every two years until age 74. But they also stress that the decision to start regular screenings before the age of 50 is an individual choice. The American Cancer Society (ACS) recommends annual mammograms for most women ages 45 to 54. Then women ages 55 and older can switch to every two years for screenings.

The best advice: If you are unsure about when you should begin getting mammograms, talk with your health care provider.



Tom Hanks

Inspiring the Extraordinary

Notoriously good-natured actor and producer Tom Hanks is known for playing ordinary characters in extraordinary circumstances. That is, he seeks out roles in which normal, honest, down-to-earth people do amazing and unexpected things. But the 64-year-old's film choices are not surprising. In many ways, they mirror his own humble but remarkable life. Despite his incredible wealth and Hollywood success, we somehow feel like we really know him. And his work—both on screen and off—inspires us to become better.

Meaningful Work

Tom leaped on to the big screen in 1984 after being cast in the fantasy-comedy film *Splash*. And within a few short years, his reputation as an actor soared. By 1989, he had earned his first best actor Academy Award nomination for his role in the film *Big*.

From those early beginnings, Tom grew in his acting talent and began taking roles in more challenging and diverse films—from *Philadelphia*, *Forrest Gump*, and *Apollo 13* to *Saving Private Ryan*, *Cast Away*, and, most recently, *Greyhound*. In each one, he plays a character who offers hope and challenges audiences to overcome difficult odds.

“A story also has the opportunity to enlighten us because, as we connect the extraordinary moments on film with the ordinary moments of our lives, we ask ourselves, ‘What am I going to do the next time I’m scared? What would it be like to say good-bye to my family for the last time?’” said Hanks in *O, The Oprah Magazine*. “The characters remind us that we’re part of a greater humanity and that we can actually affect the world by the choices we make once we leave the theater.”

Impacting Lives

This ability to stir a response in audiences has continued to propel Tom's career. With six Academy Award nominations and two Oscars for best actor, he has continued to serve as a fiercely positive force in the entertainment industry. But he may be just as

inspiring off screen, making real change through his charity efforts.

“We work very hard in a business that deserves and earns every bit of ridicule that we heap upon it,” said Tom in an interview with CBS. “But at the end of the day, you got to wake up in the morning and try to make the world a better place.”

Throughout the years, Tom has supported countless causes, from AIDS and cancer research to humanitarian work aimed at reducing injustice and protecting those neglected or abandoned. Tom has been involved in the Elevate Hope Foundation, Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity, and Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, among many others. He also served as a board member for the Entertainment Industry Foundation's Women's Cancer Research Fund and supported causes honoring our country's veterans.

**“The characters remind us ...
we can actually affect the world
by the choices we make once we
leave the theater.”**

In addition to other awards for his humanitarian service, Tom was honored for his charity work in 2016 with the Presidential Medal of Freedom by former President Barack Obama.

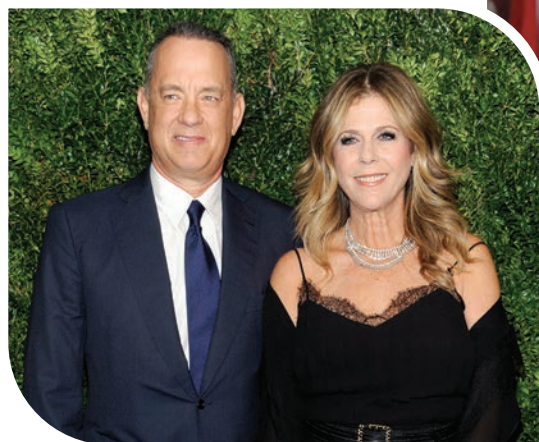
“Tom has always saved his best roles for real life,” said Obama during his remarks at the ceremony. “He is a good man—which is the best title you can have.”

Overcoming Health Issues

Clearly, we like Tom. (Doesn't everyone?) And we relate to him in so many ways. That includes his health struggles. In 2013, Tom was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes—a disease characterized by high blood sugar. With his announcement, Tom joined the more than 30 million people in the United States battling the disease.

(Right) U.S. President Barack Obama awards the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Academy Award winner, filmmaker, and social justice advocate Tom Hanks during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House November 22, 2016, in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images)

(Below) Tom Hanks and Rita Wilson attend the Tribute To Tom Hanks at Museum of Modern Art in New York City. (Photo by Rabbani and Solimene Photography/Getty Images)



“Tom has always saved his best roles for real life,” said Obama during his remarks at the ceremony. “He is a good man—which is the best title you can have.”

Although Tom’s intentional weight gain and loss for various movie roles may have played a part in his diabetes, Tom accepts responsibility for the development of the disease, which is largely influenced by lifestyle factors.

“I’m part of the lazy American generation that has blindly kept dancing through the party and now finds ourselves with a malady,” he said to *Radio Times*. “I was heavy. You’ve seen me in movies; you know what I looked like. I was a total idiot. I thought I could avoid it by removing the buns from my cheeseburgers. Well, it takes a little bit more than that.”

In response to his diagnosis, Tom and his wife, Rita Wilson, to whom he has been married for 32 years, made a number of changes. “We’ve really cut

back a lot on sugar, and we find time in every day to exercise,” Rita told *People*.

In addition to becoming more aware of healthy food choices and how they impact their health, Tom and Rita adopted activities that are good for both mind and body. For example, they started regularly walking and hiking together.

“When [you] were younger, you used to watch what you eat and exercise because you wanted to look really awesome,” Rita continued. “And now it’s because you want to feel really awesome.”

Moving Forward

No one is invincible, though. And despite living a healthier lifestyle and managing his diabetes, Tom announced earlier this year that he and Rita had contracted the coronavirus.

Thankfully, after suffering through a few weeks of symptoms, both fully recovered. And in his typical giving spirit, Tom went on to help those with severe cases of COVID-19 by donating his blood plasma, which may help victims boost their ability to fight the virus. Surprised? Not in the least.

In big ways and small, we have all been affected by the coronavirus pandemic. And to be sure, our world has been turned upside down in the past year. Tom is an example of how each and every one of us—regardless of our situation—can persevere and come through even better than before. In a way, we are all ordinary characters who have been put into extraordinary circumstances. How we handle it—and handle ourselves—is what’s important. ✚

The Power of Purpose

Finding your purpose in life is a process—but one that science says is well worth it.

→ **RESEARCHERS RECENTLY FOUND THAT WHEN PEOPLE FEEL LIKE THEIR LIVES HAVE MEANING, THEY TEND TO LIVE LONGER.**

Looking at the Facts

Growing evidence indicates that having a strong purpose improves both your physical and mental well-being. Now, this new study links sense of purpose with an increased life span and a decreased risk of dying of heart, circulatory, and blood conditions.

So how exactly does a philosophical concept like “sense of purpose” cross into the medical world of life expectancy? It’s still a bit of a mystery.

Some suggest that people who have a strong purpose in life adopt healthier habits, and that’s what helps them live longer. But it may go deeper than that. One research team found that certain aspects of purposeful living might be associated with decreased activity in genes that promote inflammation.

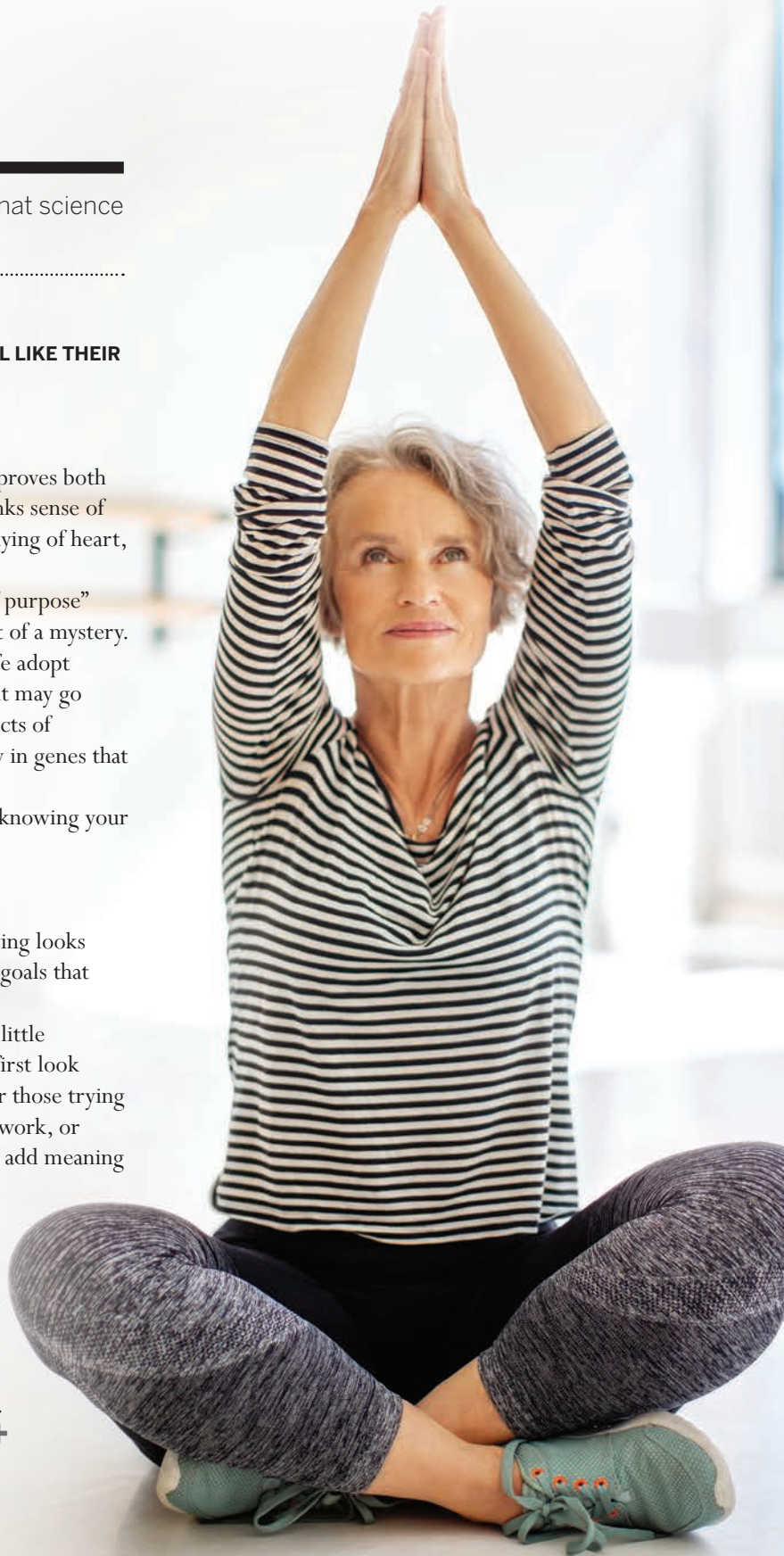
No matter the explanation, there’s a connection between knowing your purpose and living a longer life.

Making Life Meaningful

Everyone probably has their own idea of what purposeful living looks like. Generally speaking, though, it can be defined as having goals that help bring importance and direction to your life.

The thought of tackling your life’s purpose all at once is a little overwhelming. It’s OK to start smaller—maybe it’s best to first look beyond yourself. This advice might seem counterintuitive for those trying to find their purpose. But serving others through volunteer work, or simply playing with your kids, is incredibly fulfilling and can add meaning to everyday moments. Other strategies include:

- **Quieting your mind.** Research shows that something as simple as meditation can help improve purpose in life. If you’re new to the practice, remember that it’s just that—practice. Don’t put pressure on yourself to find Zen the very first try.
- **Remembering what matters most.** In the good times and the bad, don’t lose sight of what makes you uniquely you. Find meaning in yourself, and the rest is sure to follow. +



Increase Your Understanding of Diabetes

“Knowledge is power,” the saying goes. That’s particularly true when it comes to diabetes.

→ **TO UNDERSTAND DIABETES, YOU NEED TO KNOW HOW YOUR BODY NORMALLY TURNS FOOD INTO ENERGY:**

1. Much of the food you eat is broken down into sugar, which enters your bloodstream.
2. Your blood sugar level rises. When all goes well, your body responds by releasing a hormone called insulin.
3. Insulin helps move sugar from your blood into your cells. There, it’s used for energy.

When you have diabetes, however, your body either doesn’t make enough insulin or can’t use it properly. Too much sugar builds up in your blood. If this continues over time, it can lead to serious heart, eye, kidney, and foot problems.

Fortunately, there’s a lot you can do to protect yourself from diabetes. The first step is knowing your risk factors.

Who Gets Diabetes?

Diabetes affects about one in 10 Americans. The most common form is type 2 diabetes. You are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes if you:

- Are overweight
- Don’t get regular physical activity
- Are age 45 or older
- Have a parent, brother, or sister with the condition
- Are a woman who developed diabetes during pregnancy or gave birth to a large baby (more than nine pounds)

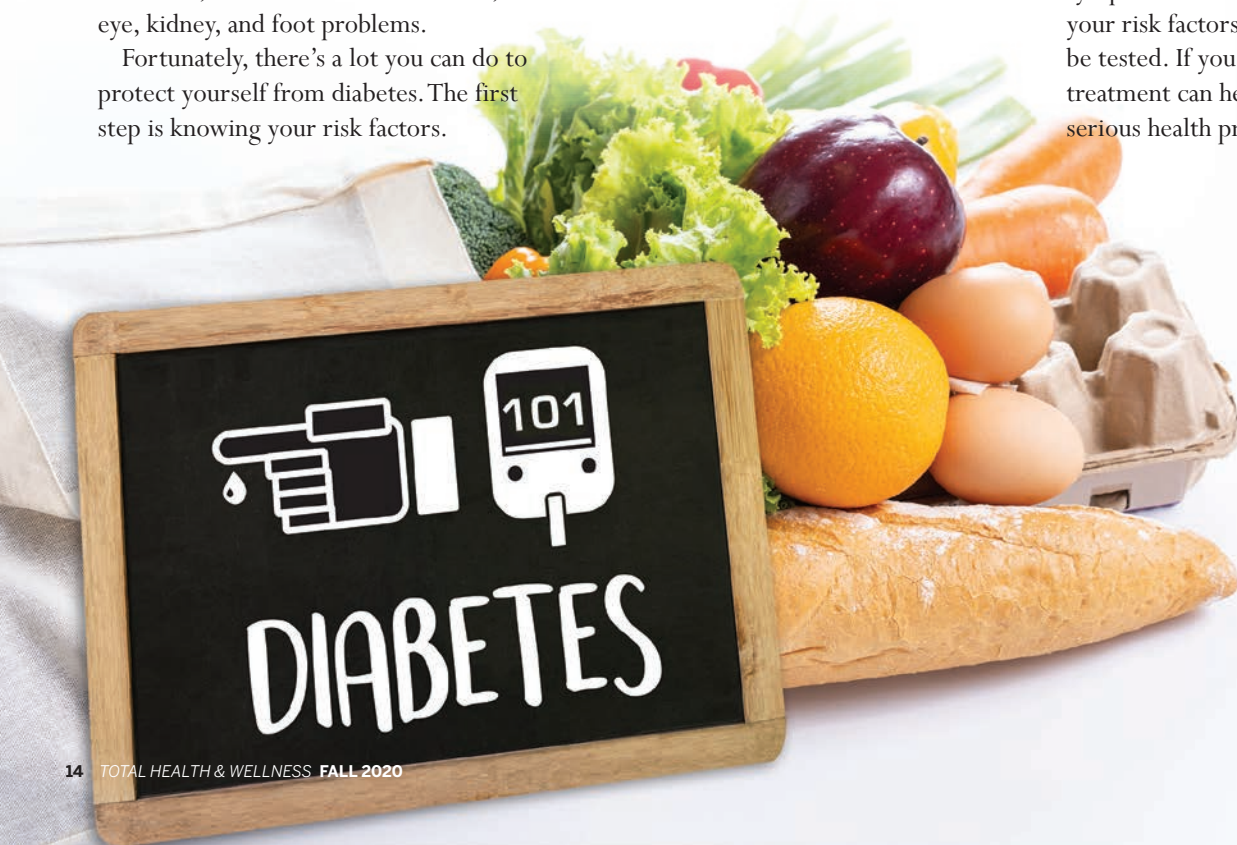
To lower your risk of getting diabetes, lose excess weight, eat healthy, and stay physically active.

How Can You Tell Whether You Have Diabetes?

Untreated diabetes may cause you to:

- Urinate a lot
- Feel unusually thirsty or hungry
- Lose weight without trying
- Feel very tired
- Have blurry vision
- Have numbness or tingling in your hands or feet

If you have these symptoms, talk with your health care provider. However, diabetes can sometimes go on for years before you have noticeable symptoms. A blood test can tell you whether you have diabetes, even if you don’t have symptoms. Talk with your provider about your risk factors and whether you should be tested. If you do have diabetes, treatment can help prevent or delay serious health problems. +



Quiz: Detect Your **Diabetes Risk**

Learning that you have a high risk of developing type 2 diabetes might sound like bad news. But it has a good side: Armed with this information, you can take steps now that may prevent or delay diabetes. Gauge your risk by answering eight questions.

Question	Answer	Points	Score
What's your age? Your chance of getting diabetes increases as you grow older.	<input type="checkbox"/> 39 or younger	0	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 40-49	1	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 50-59	2	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 or older	3	
Are you physically inactive most days of the week? Regular physical activity helps reduce your diabetes risk.	<input type="checkbox"/> No	0	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	1	
Are you overweight or obese? Calculate your body mass index at www.cdc.gov/bmi . Eating wisely and being active can help you reach and stay at a healthy weight.	<input type="checkbox"/> No	0	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Overweight	1	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Obese	2	
Are you a man or a woman? Men are more likely than women to have undiagnosed diabetes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Woman	0	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Man	1	
If you're a woman, did you ever have gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy)? A history of gestational diabetes increases your risk for type 2 diabetes.	<input type="checkbox"/> No or not applicable	0	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	1	
Have you ever been diagnosed with high blood pressure? A healthy, active lifestyle helps ward off diabetes and high blood pressure.	<input type="checkbox"/> No	0	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	1	
Are you African American, Hispanic or Latino American, American Indian, or Alaskan Native? These groups have higher diabetes rates than the general U.S. population.	<input type="checkbox"/> No	0	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	1	
Do you have a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes? Your genes affect how prone you are to developing diabetes.	<input type="checkbox"/> No	0	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	1	
Total Score:			
A total score of five or more indicates a high diabetes risk. If you score in that range, share your results with your health care provider and ask about getting tested for diabetes.			

Secondhand Smoke and Vaping: Both Bad for Kids

You've probably heard about the health risks of secondhand smoke. Now there's growing evidence that being around vaping is also risky for kids.

→ **SECONDHAND SMOKE CAN COME FROM A LIT CIGARETTE OR BE BREATHED OUT BY A SMOKER.** It contains more than 7,000 chemicals. Many are toxic. Exposure to secondhand smoke has been linked to:

- A higher risk for sudden infant death syndrome in babies
- More frequent bronchitis, pneumonia, and ear infections in babies and children
- More frequent and severe asthma attacks in kids who already have asthma

An Emerging Threat

Secondhand vaping is similar. Kids can be exposed to the aerosol from e-cigarettes. It may contain a number of harmful substances, including nicotine.

In a paper in the journal *Pediatrics*, doctors looked at how nicotine from e-cigarette aerosol may affect children. Reviewing past research, they found that nicotine can harm the nervous, respiratory, immune, and cardiovascular systems. Because children's bodies are still developing, they're especially vulnerable to these effects.

What Parents Can Do

To protect your child:

- Keep your home smoke-free and vape-free.
- Ban smoking and vaping in your vehicle.
- Ask other people, such as grandparents and babysitters, not to smoke or vape around your child. +

NEED HELP QUITTING SMOKING OR VAPING?

Online help is available through the American Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking® Plus program (www.freedomfromsmoking.org).

If you're interested in getting help over the phone, call 800-227-2345 for a phone-counseling program in your area.

Also, don't put off contacting your provider to help you quit. Your doctor can write you a prescription for a smoking-cessation aid: bupropion or varenicline. Over-the-counter nicotine gums and patches can also help.



Good Humor, Good Health

Whoever said “laughter is the best medicine” wasn’t too far off. In fact, tickling your funny bone helps support good health in many ways.

→ **THERE ARE SO MANY POTENTIAL HEALTH BENEFITS**, we need a whole chart to capture the perks:

Physical Health Benefits

- Reduces pain
- Sharpens memory
- Improves blood pressure
- Boosts heart and lung function
- Stimulates circulation
- Lowers inflammation and increases good cholesterol (in people with diabetes)

Mental Health Benefits

- Lowers stress
- Distracts from negative feelings
- Lessens symptoms of depression
- Improves mood
- Strengthens resilience
- Regulates emotions in challenging situations

But Wait, There’s More!

Laughter also has a pretty significant impact on your immune system. Research shows it can increase the number of cells that:

- Regulate immune response
- Fight off sickness
- Attack viral and tumor cells

Plus, laughter lowers your levels of cortisol—a type of hormone that can weaken your immune system. And that’s nothing to laugh at.

Daily Dose of Laughter

Let’s face it: You can’t force a chuckle, chortle, or cackle. So when it comes to reaping laughter’s benefits, look for ways to add genuine humor to your day.

Is there a particular person who always makes you laugh? Try to connect with them during the week. Are you bingeing a TV show? Look up blooper reels as you finish each season.

Here are a few other ideas to get you giggling:

- Ask everyone to share a joke at the dinner table.
- Search for funny videos on YouTube.
- Subscribe to a comedy podcast.
- Read the comics in the newspaper (or follow your favorite comic creators on social media).
- Watch a Netflix comedy special.
- Channel your inner child: Talk in a funny accent, skip down the street, throw M&M’s into a friend’s mouth ... the possibilities are endless!

Last but not least, find ways to bring laughter to those around you and spread the humor health! ✚



Don't Delay Emergency Care When You Need It

Emergencies happen, even in a pandemic. Don't ignore symptoms that might be dangerous to your health—get care right away.



→ **BECAUSE OF CONCERNS ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS, YOU MAY BE WORRIED ABOUT GOING TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM (ER).** It's important to know that medical providers are following specific procedures to keep you safe from the coronavirus. Don't let fear of getting COVID-19 keep you from receiving lifesaving care.

Is It an Emergency?

According to the American College of Emergency Physicians, you should seek immediate medical care for any of these symptoms:

- Chest pain
- Trouble breathing
- Serious injuries, like burns or head trauma
- Bleeding that won't stop
- Confusion or other major changes in behavior
- Trouble walking
- Sudden dizziness or weakness
- Severe pain
- Choking
- Loss of consciousness
- Vomiting or coughing up blood
- Vomiting or diarrhea that won't stop

Some people brush off symptoms like dizziness or chest pain. But these could be signs of a serious problem, like a stroke or heart attack, making it essential to get the right care right away.

What ERs Are Doing to Keep Patients Safe

Following guidance from the CDC, medical facilities have adopted infection control protocols such as:

- Practicing social distancing when possible
- Washing hands often
- Sanitizing patient and public spaces and frequently disinfecting high-touch surfaces (such as doorknobs, handrails, light switches, and elevator buttons)
- Outfitting providers in personal protective equipment, including gloves and masks

In addition, hospitals are screening staff, patients, and visitors for the coronavirus before they can enter the ER. Screening involves having your temperature taken and answering questions about symptoms. Individuals who have COVID-19 symptoms are treated in a separate area of the hospital.

Safety Steps That You Can Take

If you need to go to the ER, the CDC recommends taking the same steps you should be taking anywhere to prevent illness:



Practice social distancing. While you're in the ER lobby, try to keep a distance of six feet between yourself and other people. Even though patients who are being treated for COVID-19 will be in a separate space, some people can carry the virus without having symptoms.



Wear a mask or cloth face covering. The CDC recommends that people wear cloth face coverings over their mouths and noses while in public, especially in places where social distancing might be difficult. This includes the ER. Face coverings do not need to be worn by people who are having trouble breathing or are unconscious. Children younger than age two also don't need to wear masks.



Wash your hands frequently. Do so after using the bathroom, blowing your nose, or touching a public surface. Use soap and water and scrub for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.



Steer clear of high-touch areas. If you must touch the elevator button or handrail, use your elbow or cover your hand with a tissue or sleeve.



Don't touch your face. Germs on your hands can infect you if you touch your face, nose, or eyes.

For more safety tips, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus and select "HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF." +

What to Do if You Think You Have

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

Your Decision Guide

If you don't feel well and are concerned you may have the coronavirus (COVID-19), use this guide to help you decide next steps.

DO YOU HAVE LIFE-THREATENING SYMPTOMS? THESE INCLUDE:



Trouble breathing



Ongoing chest pain or pressure



Confusion



Problems waking up



Blue-colored lips or face



**CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY!
THIS IS AN EMERGENCY!**

Y

N

DO YOU HAVE ANY COVID-19 SYMPTOMS?



Fever



Chills



Cough



Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing



Fatigue



Muscle or body aches



Headache



New loss of taste or smell



Sore throat



Congestion or runny nose



Nausea or vomiting



Diarrhea



**ARE YOU IN AN AREA WHERE
COVID-19 IS SPREADING?**

Y

N

Call your health care provider.

Call your health care provider to discuss your symptoms. Your provider will decide if you need to be seen in person and tested for COVID-19.



IF YOU'RE DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19 AND HAVE MILD SYMPTOMS ...



Stay home and away from other people



Notify your health care provider right away if your symptoms worsen



Visit [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov) for other steps to take and up-to-date information

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Snowbirds, It's Time to Plan Your Winter Health Care

Do you migrate south for warmer weather every winter? That may not seem like a top-of-mind priority at the moment. But winter is just around the corner!

→ HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW TO GET YOUR HEALTH CARE READY FOR SNOWBIRD SEASON.

Sign up for your doctor's online patient portal. This secure website gives you access to your medical records from anywhere with an internet connection. You may also be able to use the portal to send secure messages to your health care provider.

Download your provider's mobile app. This helps you manage your health care needs on the go with a smartphone or tablet.

Ask about having routine prescriptions delivered by mail. When the time comes, you may be able to arrange delivery to your winter address.

Register for your health plan's telehealth program. This allows you to set up online doctor appointments for many common complaints, such as a sore throat or sinus infection. You may also be able to schedule online appointments with a therapist or psychiatrist for mental health concerns, such as anxiety or depression. +

