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For Health Care

SPRING 2021

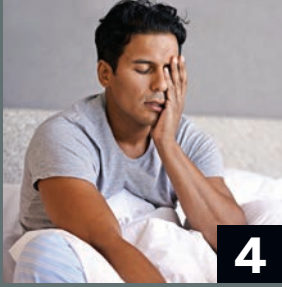
John Legend

Teaches Us to
Love Life

The Truth
About Vaccines

Q & A About
Pancreatic
Cancer

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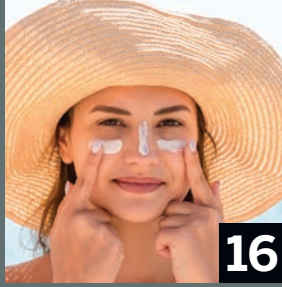


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TOTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

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Grow for Color to Avoid Spring Allergies

Love spring flowers but not the itchy eyes and runny nose you seem to get every time you go near a beautiful bloom? Try planting roses, sunflowers, and daffodils! These and other vibrant-hued flowers that rely on insects for pollination are less likely to cause allergies.

Another smart move: If you've been working in the garden, be sure to remove your work gloves and shoes before going inside to avoid tracking any outdoor triggers in with you.



Where There's Smoke ...

It's not just tobacco smoke that can trigger asthma symptoms. Smoke from barbecues, fireworks, and campfires can

also irritate your lungs. When enjoying these outdoor activities, try keeping your distance. Sit upwind whenever possible and move somewhere else if the wind starts blowing smoke your way. If s'mores are on the menu, have someone toast the marshmallow for you.



Add Iodine to Your Diet for a Healthy Thyroid

Did you know that you need iodine to produce thyroid hormone? But because your body can't make this mineral, you must get it from your diet. Iodine is found in foods including dairy, eggs, seaweed, saltwater fish, shellfish, and soy milk. But it can be hard to know whether you're getting enough. Using iodized salt (unless you have to restrict salt in your diet) can help ensure you get the iodine you need.

The Benefits of Breakfast for Kids

If your kids are skipping breakfast, they might be missing out on important nutrients, according to a study published in the *British Journal of Nutrition*. Researchers tracked the diets of kids ages 4 to 18 for a period of four years. The kids who regularly ate breakfast were much more likely to get the recommended amounts of calcium, iron, and folate than those who skipped this meal. Fortified breakfast cereals, dairy products, and fruit are all good choices to start the day.



Don't Make Exercise a Chore



Many people have trouble keeping up with their fitness plans, oftentimes because chores and to-do lists take priority over exercising. At the same time, we often lump fitness into the chore category. And when something is a chore, it can be easier to leave it undone. Try reframing your commitment to fitness as a *desire*, and you may find that it becomes easier to stay on track. Also, choose exercise you enjoy. The positive emotion will enhance your experience and make you want to exercise more.

Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

When it comes to shut-eye, seven or eight (hours) is your lucky number. Nighttime stretches of sleep falling into this range help you stay healthy and feel good during the day.



→ **IN FACT, SLEEP AND MENTAL HEALTH GO HAND IN HAND.** Lack of quality sleep can make people feel irritable, fatigued, and forgetful. It can even lead to anxiety and feeling depressed. But depression and anxiety can also lead to sleep disturbances. It's important to talk about your overall health when discussing sleep problems—and how to address them—with your health care provider.

Is It Insomnia?

Most people have trouble sleeping at some point. The sleep disorder insomnia, however, follows the “rule of three.” This means one or more of the following symptoms last at least three months and occur at least three nights a week:

- Not being able to fall asleep
- Waking up too early
- Not feeling rested after sleeping

You may also wake up during the night and have trouble falling back to sleep. Older adults, women, and people with depression or other conditions, like sleep apnea and asthma, have a higher risk for insomnia.

A variety of medicines can influence how you sleep. For example, insomnia can result from taking beta-blockers used to manage high blood pressure. High stress and time changes during travel can also increase your risk.

Move More, Sleep More

Brisk walking and other moderate-to-vigorous physical activities can boost the quality and length of your sleep at night.

Both early-morning and afternoon workouts can improve your nighttime sleep. Evening exercise is a little trickier. Some people may be able to work out at night without problems. If that's you, don't change your routine. For most people, though, strenuous workouts late in the evening are likely to delay falling asleep. Replace your evening exercise with simple stretches or yoga to help you relax and prepare for bed.

Fuel Your Slumber

Having caffeine and foods that cause heartburn at night can hurt your efforts to sleep. So can sugary treats and white bread. Instead, try oatmeal or nut butter on whole wheat crackers. The National Sleep Foundation also suggests these snacks:

- **Almonds or walnuts:** Eating these nuts can help you sleep more soundly thanks to the hormone melatonin.
- **Cottage cheese with fresh raspberries:** Ward off low serotonin levels with the amino acid in this lean protein. The berries offer another dose of melatonin.
- **Kiwifruit:** Two of these little guys before bed can increase how long you sleep by an hour over the course of the month if you have insomnia.

Small changes to your habits can help with many sleep problems. But reach out to your provider if you continue to struggle. Share your symptoms and past efforts to sleep better. Bring your current medications to your visit. Together, you can find and treat the cause. +



TEST YOUR SAVVY ON ... SLEEP HYGIENE

- 1 For better sleep, keep your bedroom quiet, dark, and cool.
 True False
- 2 It's OK to vary your bedtime every night.
 True False
- 3 Set a bedtime ritual to signal to your body and brain that it's time to unwind.
 True False
- 4 Drink coffee only in the morning to help you sleep at night.
 True False

Answers

1. True. Somewhere between 60 and 67 degrees is an optimal sleeping temperature for most people. And stay away from alarm clocks that give off a sleep-disrupting light.
2. False. Try to go to bed at the same time on a nightly basis. This will keep your internal clock on schedule.
3. True. Find something relaxing you can look forward to, like drinking a cup of herbal tea or practicing a breathing exercise.
4. True. Caffeine even six hours before bedtime could hurt your sleep. Alcohol, another stimulant, could also keep you up at night.

Could Plants Preserve Your Brainpower?

Eating less meat and more veggies has long been linked with a healthier heart. But nutritious plant-based diets during midlife may also benefit another critical organ as you age: your brain.

→ **FOR A NEW STUDY, RESEARCHERS CHECKED THE DIETS OF NEARLY 17,000 ADULTS AGES 45 TO 74.** Those whose meals were rich in healthy vegetables and limited animal-based foods were less likely to experience cognitive decline over the following two decades.

Why Brain Health Grows on Trees

The nutrients in foods like fruits, veggies, and whole grains may boost gut health. This, in turn, benefits your central nervous system. Plant foods may also protect against inflammation,

a reaction to illness or injury that, left unchecked, can damage the body's DNA and increase the risk for cancer.

What's more, healthful plant-based eating patterns can help combat high blood pressure—a risk factor for certain cognitive problems. Scientists speculate that improvements to cardiovascular health may play a role in decreasing dementia risk.

The Best Ways to Go Veg

To reap the brain-boosting rewards of reducing your meat intake:

- **Try meat substitutes.** Your grocery store's freezer may stock nonmeat versions of many of your favorite dishes. Look for vegetarian burgers, sausage, chicken, hot dogs, and bacon. But base the bulk of your diet on less processed options.
- **Lean on legumes.** Beans, peas, and lentils are incredibly versatile plant-based sources of protein. You can make them into sliderlike patties, toss them in salads, or mash them to spread on tortillas.



Asparagus and Pea Salad with Fresh Herbs



Asparagus, pea tendrils, fresh herbs—this salad is a celebration of spring that you can enjoy any time of year. If you can't find pea tendrils (pea sprouts) at your grocery store, substitute alfalfa sprouts instead.

Ingredients

¼ cup fresh tarragon leaves, loosely packed	1 tbsp. honey
¼ cup fresh mint leaves, loosely packed	¼ tsp. sea salt
¼ cup fresh dill, loosely packed	¼ tsp. black pepper
2 tbsp. low-fat sour cream	1 lb. asparagus, ends removed, chopped
1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil	1 cup frozen peas, thawed
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice	1 shallot, diced (about ¼ cup)
	5 cups salad greens of your choice
	1¼ cups pea tendrils (pea sprouts) or alfalfa sprouts

Directions

- 1 Bring a medium pot of water to boil over high heat.
- 2 Meanwhile, place tarragon, mint, dill, sour cream, olive oil, lemon juice, honey, sea salt, and black pepper into a food processor. Blend until creamy and smooth, about two minutes.
- 3 Place chopped asparagus into boiling water and boil for one minute.
- 4 Remove asparagus from the pot with a slotted spoon and add directly to a bowl of ice water. Let sit for five minutes, then use a colander to ensure the asparagus is well-drained.
- 5 In a large bowl, stir together asparagus, peas, and shallot. Pour dressing on top. Stir until well combined.
- 6 To serve, place 1 cup greens on a plate, top with ½ cup asparagus-pea mixture, then top with ¼ cup pea tendrils or sprouts.

Per Serving

Serves five. Each serving provides: 100 calories, 4 g total fat (1 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat), 3 mg cholesterol, 160 mg sodium, 15 g total carbohydrate, 4 g dietary fiber, 8 g sugars, 5 g protein.

- **Consider creative options.** Try “rice,” pizza crusts, or “steaks” made with cauliflower. Consider also roasted-squash macaroni and cheese, meatless chili, tofu-vegetable stir-fry, and bean burritos. These options represent nutritious, plant-based updates to favorite dishes.

In addition, pay close attention to your intake of vitamin B-12. Deficiencies could increase your risk for dementia. If you don't eat eggs or dairy products, include fortified cereals or other grains in your diet. Most adults need 2.4 micrograms daily; check package labels for details. +

The Truth About Vaccines: They're Safe and Effective

Some social media groups and celebrities say vaccines pose a danger to you and your family. But in fact, the opposite is true. The World Health Organization (WHO) recently named vaccine hesitancy—skipping vaccines because of doubts about them—as one of the biggest threats to global health.



→ **DON'T FALL FOR THE HYPE. VACCINES PROTECT YOU, YOUR CHILDREN, AND YOUR COMMUNITY FROM MANY DEADLY DISEASES.** Here are the straight facts about immunization.

Vaccines Must Meet Very High Safety Standards

You may have heard that vaccines can make people sick. But, in fact, most vaccines are made with weak or dead germs, so they can't give you the flu, measles, or other diseases. An exception to this are the first two coronavirus vaccines to be approved. These are made differently from traditional vaccines and don't use any real virus at all.

In addition, most vaccine side effects are minor—say, a sore arm or mild fever—and go away quickly. Rarely, serious side effects after a vaccine do

occur. But the risk of getting very sick, or even dying, from the illness is far higher.

Vaccines Are Safe for Children, Too

Kids get vaccines against 14 diseases during their first two years. That's also when health problems such as autism and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) arise. Because of the timing, parents may wonder whether vaccines are the cause. However, experts have conducted multiple large studies and found no links.

Getting Exposed to a Disease Is Not Better Than Getting a Shot

Getting a disease may give you future protection from illness. But with a vaccine, you can avoid getting sick—and the complications that can sometimes come with it, including hospitalization and death. +

A CLOSER LOOK: THE NEW COVID-19 VACCINES

The new COVID-19 vaccines may have you feeling hopeful. At the same time, you may feel unsure about what to expect. Here are five things you should know:

- 1** The new COVID-19 vaccines are made to help protect you against a disease that can cause serious illness and even death. The vaccines also help protect your family, close contacts, and community.
- 2** Some of the available vaccines require two shots in order to be effective. If you miss the second dose, you won't get the full benefit.
- 3** None of the vaccines being used against COVID-19 can actually give you COVID-19.

- 4** Despite the fast development time, COVID-19 vaccines must meet the same strict standards for safety and effectiveness as any vaccine.
- 5** At times, you'll still need to wear a mask and social distance after you get the vaccine, at least for a while. The CDC says it still needs to learn more before fully changing these important safety recommendations.

Have more questions? Talk with a health care provider you trust. For the latest news from the CDC, go to www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

Have a Chronic Condition?

Following Your Care Plan Is Key to Staying Healthy

Now more than ever, it's important to continue taking care of your health and not delay essential treatment.

→ **LIVING WITH A CHRONIC HEALTH PROBLEM MEANS TAKING TIME TO MANAGE YOUR CONDITION.** But with the COVID-19 pandemic still going on, you may be finding it hard to stick with your care plan. Your health care provider is here to help.

Keep in Touch with Your Provider

You can talk with your health care provider over the phone or schedule an online (telehealth) visit through a computer or another device. Your provider may also have an online patient portal or an app that can help you keep track of your care.

When talking with your provider, you may want to go over these key parts of your care plan:

- **Your medicines.** Always take your medicines as prescribed. If you have any concerns, tell your provider. Make sure you have enough medicine on hand to last at least 30 days. Ask your provider about getting an extra supply, if needed.
- **Preventive care.** Screening tests and vaccines can help keep you healthy. But these often need to be done in person. Your provider can help you decide if it's OK to delay them for a while.
- **Tests and treatments.** As with preventive care, some tests and treatments may be postponed. But that depends on your health situation. Ask your provider about the benefits and risks of coming in for care. Keep doing any at-home tests, such as checking your blood sugar or blood pressure, as directed.

- **Your mental health.** You may be feeling stressed, anxious, or depressed right now. These feelings can make your condition worse. Tell your provider how you feel so that you can get the help you need.
- **Changes in your condition.** Make sure you know what to do if your condition worsens or if you become sick. Call your provider right away if you notice any new symptoms.

A healthy lifestyle can also help you manage your condition. Do your best to eat well and exercise regularly. If you smoke, try to quit. Your provider can help you put together a plan for making positive changes.

When You Need In-Person Care

In some cases, you may need to go to your health care provider's office for care. If so, don't let concerns about COVID-19 keep you from getting the care you need to stay healthy. Safety measures have been put in place to protect you from the coronavirus.

In addition to what your provider is doing, be sure to wear your own mask. Also, make sure you wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after touching surfaces like door handles, elevator buttons, or chairs. And always practice social distancing, even if other patients don't appear sick. +





John
Legend

Teaches Us to Love Life

If there's anyone who lives up to his name, it's the soulful R&B artist John Legend. Ivy League educated. Highly acclaimed singer-songwriter. Champion of justice and equality. Dedicated husband and father. All-around good person. But his successes haven't happened by chance. He created them by focusing on one simple yet profound guiding principle: love.

"We were all made to love," Legend said in a 2014 graduation speech at the University of Pennsylvania, his alma mater. "And I've found that we live our best lives, we are at our most successful, not simply because we're smarter than everyone else, or because we hustle harder. ... The key to success, the key to happiness, is opening your mind and your heart to love."

Shattering Barriers

Born John Stephens, Legend was a prodigy musician and student, attending high school two years early. After graduating from college, he successfully worked in consulting while pitching his music at night. It wasn't long before his musical gifts were discovered and he took his current stage name.

Legend began singing backup and collaborating on songwriting with some of the industry's biggest talents. His first major album, *Get Lifted*, debuted in 2004 and earned him three Grammy awards. His stardom rose from there—garnering him accolades as a singer, songwriter, producer, director, and actor. In 2018, Legend was the youngest person and first African American to join the ranks of the very few EGOT (Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony) winners.

"I get a kick out of bringing joy and spreading love to other people through my music," Legend told *Esquire*. "It never was about winning a bunch of trophies. It was more about doing something creatively that I was excited about and could be proud of."

Making the World Better

Legend's fame has served as a platform for the many causes he believes in. In fact, that had been his strategy all along. At age 16, Legend wrote an essay of his plan to become a successful

musician and use that success to help fight for justice.

"I've always cared about politics. I've always cared about justice. I've always cared about what it means to be a good leader and what it means to be a good citizen and community member," Legend said to *Esquire*.

Legend has put those beliefs into practice through his extensive charity work. He established the Show Me Campaign to help children around the globe receive a quality education and reach their full potential. His campaign Free America worked to transform the country's criminal justice system and end mass incarceration. He has fought against food deserts in America. And he has championed for equal rights for all people. The list goes on and on.

His primary motivation? "The idea that you value people's lives no matter who they are or where they live or how different they are from you ... we should love our neighbor, which is everyone, as we love ourselves," Legend said to the *Guardian*.

"Pursue this life of love with focus and passion and ambition and courage. Give it your all. And that will be your path to true success."

Focusing on Family

Legend has put as much intention and focus on his family as he has for his many charitable causes. In 2013, Legend married model and cookbook author Chrissy Teigen. Together, they have two children—Luna and Miles Theodore—and are often referred to as entertainment's "first family" for their devotion to each other.

"Love is an important part of being alive, and it's also an important part of being happy," said Legend to *Esquire*. "Relationships are the most important way to be happy by

John Legend is proud to serve as the vice chairman of the Harlem Village Academies board of directors. HVA works to revolutionize public education in our nation by building a K–12 public school district and an educators' institute based on the ideals of progressive pedagogy. (Photo: LRNG)



connecting with the people you love and care about.”

When Legend and his wife lost their third child, they openly shared their grief with the public in hopes of helping others. The loss also inspired their work with Ronald McDonald House Charities, which supports families with sick or injured children.

“Anyone who knows us knows that the most important thing to us is family. When you’re able to lean on loved ones, the hard times always get a little easier,” Chrissy Teigen said in a statement published in *People*.

Finding Balance

Legend may be married to a famous model, but his own physique has also hit the headlines. In 2019, Legend was chosen by *People* as “The Sexiest Man Alive.” One reason for his sexy status and lean body is his balanced focus on health.

Legend believes in the power of small healthy steps, like boosting his vegetable intake. In fact, Legend is known to eat a salad of dark leafy greens with vinaigrette dressing at every meal, even breakfast. A typical day includes eggs, salad, and whole wheat toast for breakfast; a salad with protein at lunch; and a “fun” dinner. And that’s where the balance comes in. Although Legend and

his wife typically enjoy a dinner of a healthy protein and vegetables, they allow for indulgences. Hint: Legend’s favorite comfort food is fried chicken.

“Everything’s in moderation,” Legend said to *People*. “Obviously, we have moments where we want to have fun and indulge, but if you take those small steps to have some balance in your life, all those steps can be helpful.”

Legend also keeps healthy by exercising for an hour most mornings. Although he may up his fitness routine to prepare for a project—for example, he needed to appear lean for his portrayal of Jesus in the live version of *Jesus Christ Superstar*—he enjoys simple exercises like running or walking.

It’s clear that Legend is an inspiration in both health and living life. And he’s created a better world in his path.

“Love yourself, love your work, love the people around you. *Dare* to love those who are different from you, no matter where they’re from, what they look like, and who they love. Pursue this life of love with focus and passion and ambition and courage. Give it your all. And that will be your path to true success,” Legend advised in his graduation speech.

If you’re looking for a true legend, you’ve found him. +



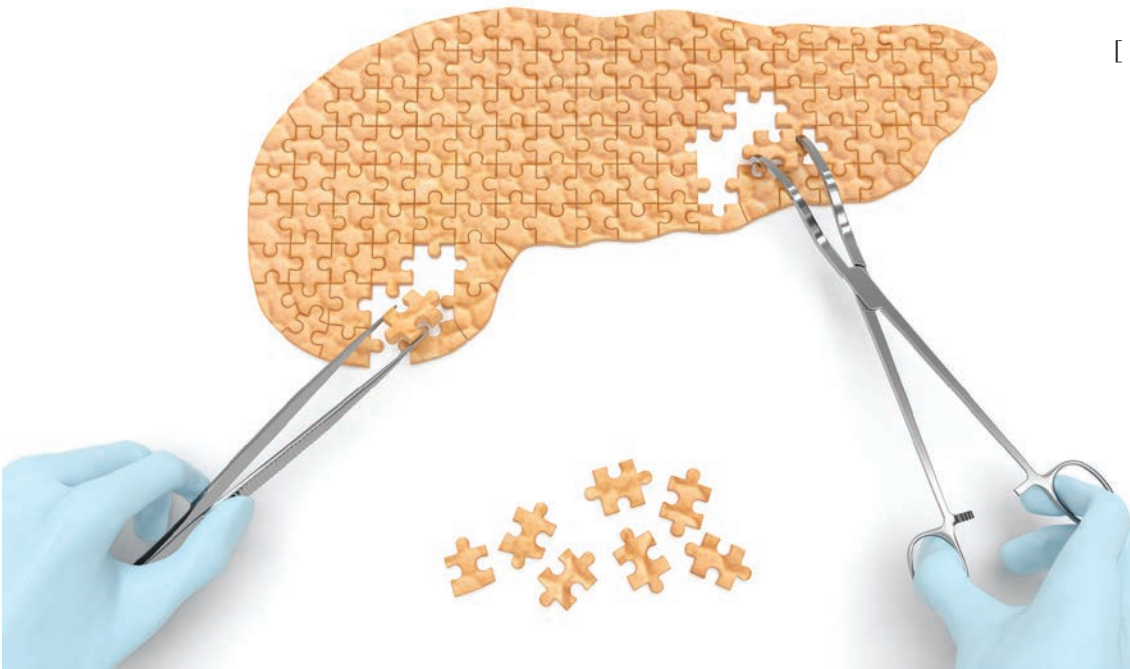
United Service Association
For Health Care Foundation
Giving from the Heart

YOUR USA+ MEMBERSHIP HELPS OTHER PEOPLE, TOO!

Many people are facing significant challenges: financial, emotional, or physical problems that severely impact the quality of their lives. And many times, all that is usually needed is some assistance from someone who truly cares. On the other hand, there are many people who would love to participate in charitable causes—they just might not know how to reach out and help. Maybe you’re one of those people. If so, it might be comforting for you to know that your United Service Association For Health Care (USA+) membership includes an extra benefit: philanthropy.

As a member of the USA+ family, a portion of your membership fee is donated to the USA+ Foundation, which gives to charities that make a difference and are committed to saving and improving lives. Through the combined contributions of our members, more than \$8 million has been awarded to more than 200 worthwhile charities, community programs, and national research programs. Remember: Together, we can make a real difference.

For additional information regarding the USA+ Foundation or to request a Donation Grant Application form, please email us at info@usahc.com or call 800-872-1187.



Questions (and Answers) About **Pancreatic Cancer**

You may not hear as much about cancer of the pancreas as some other more common diseases. But in 2020, an estimated 57,600 Americans were diagnosed with this deadly cancer.

→ **THAT'S WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHAT PUTS YOU AT RISK, SYMPTOMS TO LOOK FOR, AND STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO COMBAT IT.**

Q. Who is likely to develop pancreatic cancer?

A. The likelihood of this cancer increases with age. Most cases are diagnosed in people ages 65 and older. Cigarette smokers are about two times more likely than nonsmokers to develop pancreatic cancer. It's more common in men than women and in African Americans than individuals from other ethnic groups.

People with diabetes also have a greater risk, as do those with chronic pancreatitis—a chronic inflammation of the pancreas. Plus, having a family history of pancreatic cancer or certain types of colorectal, breast, or ovarian cancer also increases the risk.

Q. Should I be screened for pancreatic cancer?

A. Medical experts don't currently recommend routine screening, but people who suspect they're at risk should discuss it with their health care provider.

Q. What are the symptoms?

A. Early pancreatic cancer is hard to detect because there often are no noticeable signs of it. As the cancer grows, symptoms may include:

- Pain in the middle or upper abdomen or back
- Yellowed skin and eyes
- Appetite loss
- Nausea and vomiting
- Weight loss

Talk with your health care provider if you're having any of these symptoms.

Q. Can I prevent pancreatic cancer?

A. You can take steps to lower your risk of developing this cancer:

- If you smoke or use other tobacco products, quit.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Limit the amount of red, processed (such as sausage and bacon), and well-done or fried meats you eat.
- Include lots of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in your diet.
- Avoid sugary drinks and alcohol. If you drink alcohol, have no more than one serving a day for women and two a day for men.+

Be a COVID-19 Pandemic Supporter

Support Hospital Patients Through the American Red Cross

In times of need, people come together to support one another. With no known end date to the coronavirus fight, the American Red Cross is encouraging healthy individuals to be a superhero for hospital patients in need of transfusions by giving blood, platelets, or plasma; recruiting donors; volunteering time; or hosting a blood drive.

→ **BLOOD DONATION IS CONSIDERED AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE—MEANING IT MUST CONTINUE, EVEN DURING THE PANDEMIC, SO THAT PATIENTS IN THE HOSPITAL CAN RECEIVE LIFESAVING MEDICAL CARE.**

The need for blood has continued during the pandemic, with trauma patients, those battling cancer, mothers experiencing childbirth complications, children with sickle cell disease, and others continuing to need transfusions for vital medical treatments.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in additional challenges in ensuring a stable blood supply, and the Red Cross has worked hard to respond to these unprecedented challenges.

- **Blood drive cancellations:** Throughout this pandemic, the Red Cross has seen tens of thousands of blood drive cancellations across the country due to coronavirus concerns, resulting in more than a million uncollected blood donations. The Red Cross has worked hard to mitigate these losses and needs the ongoing help of blood donors and blood drive hosts to ensure blood products are readily available during COVID-19. It's important to remember that blood is perishable and cannot be stockpiled.
- **Convalescent plasma:** This pandemic has caused the Red Cross to adapt its

collections to include plasma from COVID-19 survivors to potentially help those battling the virus. In 2020, the Red Cross distributed more than 145,000 convalescent plasma products to hospitals across the country thanks to the generosity of tens of thousands of donors. As the number of COVID-19 cases continues to rise, so does the need for convalescent plasma.

- **Antibody testing:** The Red Cross began testing blood, platelet, and plasma donations for COVID-19 antibodies in June 2020 to help provide donors insight into whether they may have been exposed to this coronavirus. Additionally, as part of this effort, plasma from whole blood donations that test positive for COVID-19 antibodies may now help current coronavirus patients in need of convalescent plasma transfusions. The Red Cross is coordinating with state health departments and federal agencies to provide requested antibody test results as all work to learn more about this virus and its prevalence in our communities.
- **Diverse blood needs:** Amid this pandemic, there is an urgent need for more African American blood donors to help patients battling sickle cell disease. Unfortunately, the Red Cross

has seen a significant decrease of African American blood donors due to the coronavirus. Blood transfusions from the Black community help to provide lifesaving treatments for patients during a sickle cell crisis. In the U.S., about 100,000 people are living with sickle cell disease, most of whom are of African or Hispanic descent. These patients often require blood transfusions throughout their lives to manage their disease.

To help address these challenges, the Red Cross invites individuals to be a superhero for patients by getting involved in one of these ways:

- **Donate:** Make an appointment to donate blood, platelets, or plasma in the coming weeks, and commit to giving on a regular basis to ensure a stable supply.
- **Recruit:** Invite family, friends, coworkers, and others to donate to spread the word about this important need.
- **Volunteer:** Give time volunteering by helping register donors at a blood drive or transporting donated blood to hospitals.
- **Host:** Host a blood drive at your work, school, church, or other site to give more people an opportunity to donate.

Superhero—



“Patients are in the hospital needing transfusions every day of the year, and that need doesn’t stop due to the pandemic,” said Jessa Merrill, director of communications for Red Cross Biomedical Services. “By giving blood or hosting a blood drive now, you can help play an important role in ensuring a stable blood supply for daily medical needs, as well as potentially support patients battling COVID-19. It’s a quick, simple, and easy way to make a meaningful impact during this challenging time.”

Make an Appointment

Healthy individuals who are feeling well are asked to make an appointment to

donate by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org), downloading the free **Red Cross Blood Donor App**, calling **800-RED CROSS (800-733-2767)**, or enabling the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device. Each Red Cross blood drive and donation center follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and additional precautions—including social distancing and face coverings for donors and staff—have been implemented to safeguard donors, volunteers, and employees. Those interested in volunteering time or hosting a blood drive can find more information at [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org). +

ABOUT THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds, and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation’s blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org) or [cruzrojaamericana.org](https://www.cruzrojaamericana.org), or visit them on Twitter at @RedCross.



Deadly Skin Cancer Is on the Rise Among Young People

No, base tans don't protect against sunburns and skin damage. A bronze hue doesn't equal a healthy glow. But these misconceptions persist, and they do more than make dermatologists bang their fists in frustration. These myths may also have deadly consequences.

→ **TANS AND BURNS BOTH SIGNAL EXPOSURE TO CANCER-CAUSING UV RAYS.** A new study finds a 51 percent increase in the rates of the dangerous skin cancer melanoma on the heads and necks of kids, teens, and young adults in North America over the past two decades.

Fair Skin and Bright Sun Boost Risk

Melanoma begins when mutations develop in cells called melanocytes, which make skin's pigment. Most diagnoses come later in life, at an average age of 65.

But that doesn't make younger people immune. In fact, melanoma is the most common skin cancer among children. It occurs even more often in teens ages 15 to 19.

People with fair skin, light eyes, and red or blond hair are at higher risk. The study authors point out that two other main risk factors—sun exposure and the use of tanning beds—are most common among adolescents and young adults.

Only about one in five cases form on the head and neck. However, the prognosis for melanoma in these locations is worse than on other parts of the body.

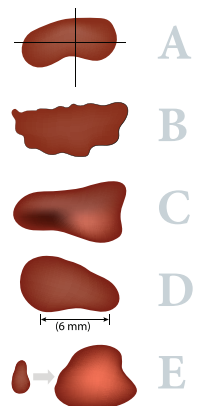
Parents: Protect and Detect

The best way to save your child's or teen's skin? Start sun-safety education early. Explain during childhood that tanning exposes skin to cancer-causing UV rays. As they reach adolescence, continue to discourage it, even for onetime events like prom, homecoming, and spring break.

Remember the ABCDE method of detecting skin cancer. Signs include moles that have:

- **A**symmetry
- **B**orders or edges that are irregular
- **C**olor that's not uniform
- **D**iameter of more than 6 millimeters
- **E**volved over time

If you spot these signs on your child, talk with their pediatrician or a dermatologist. +



5 Reasons Your Legs Hurt— And What to Do About It

Sometimes, it's a sharp, stabbing sensation. At other times, it's a dull throbbing. Leg pain can wake you at night, make it harder to move, or signal serious health problems.

→ **RELIEF STARTS WITH IDENTIFYING THE ISSUE. HERE ARE FIVE COMMON CAUSES OF LOWER EXTREMITY ACHES.**

1 Shin Splints

Weekend warriors take note: This sharp or dull pain often flares in your lower leg during or after exercise. Ramping up a fitness routine quickly inflames and irritates the soft tissues in your shin. Rest, ice, and stretching help—but see a doctor to rule out other conditions, such as stress fractures. Once the pain subsides, resume activity gradually.

2 Muscle Cramps

These so-called charley horses occur when muscles suddenly seize and won't relax. They often strike in the middle of the night or midactivity. Fatigue or dehydration may contribute. Fortunately, they usually let up with gentle massage and stretching.

3 Muscle Strains

Whether in one sudden movement or repeated stress over time, overtaxed muscles can stretch or tear. Signs include pain, spasms, swelling, muscle weakness, and limited motion. Strains can range from mild—which rest and time will heal—to more serious cases requiring surgery. Your doctor can determine the severity.

4 Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)

The same type of plaque that causes heart attacks can also block blood flow to your legs and feet. The resulting leg pain or weakness usually starts when walking and subsides within minutes after stopping. Without medications, exercise programs, or other treatments, you could develop sores, infections, or other serious complications.

5 Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)

Blood clots in a deep vein of your leg may also interfere with circulation. Your affected leg may swell, turn red, or feel warm. DVT can be life-threatening if a clot breaks off and travels to the lungs, so see your doctor right away if you notice any of these symptoms. The

condition is more common among people who are older, take hormonal treatments like birth control, or have been resting after surgery or an injury.

If you're concerned about any of these issues, talk with your doctor. The right diagnosis and treatment can help you make strides toward better health. +



Women: Midlife Isn't Too Late to Slash Stroke Risk

Ask women their health fears, and breast cancer often tops the list. But twice as many will eventually succumb to stroke.



→ **EACH YEAR, MORE WOMEN THAN MEN DIE OF STROKE. WHAT'S MORE, STROKES ARE THE LEADING CAUSE OF PREVENTABLE DISABILITY IN THE U.S.**

The good news? Four in five strokes can be prevented. And a new study suggests that even if you start in midlife, you can still make a big impact.

Measuring Risk

Strokes occur when blood flow to the brain is blocked. Starved of oxygen, brain cells die off within minutes, possibly leaving you debilitated—or worse.

To study stroke prevention, researchers used data from a large study of nearly 60,000 women. Starting when they were an average age of 52, participants answered a set of questions about diet, exercise, and other behaviors every few years.

Over 26 years of follow-up, the women's risk of having a stroke was 4.7 percent. However, if they made a few lifestyle adjustments, their risk declined by one-fourth, to 3.5 percent.

A Blueprint for Better Health

The women's secrets to stroke-prevention success came from these combined strategies:

- Not smoking
- Exercising 30 minutes or more per day
- Gradually losing weight (if they needed to)
- Eating a healthy diet

What did an antistroke diet look like?

Daily, they'd consume:

- Five or more servings of fruits and vegetables
- One or more servings of nuts
- Two or more servings of whole grains
- Five to 15 grams—about one standard drink—or less of alcohol

And each week, they had:

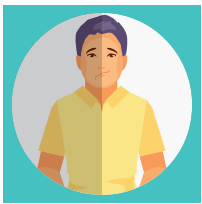
- Three or more servings of fish
- Three or fewer servings of red meat
- No processed meat

These switches are simple—but lifestyle change isn't always easy. Start by assessing where your behavior is now. Then, create an action plan of small steps to get started. Your health care provider can serve as a guide through this process. +

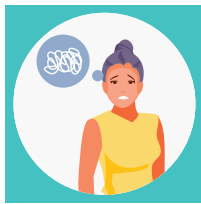
STROKE 101

Every **40 seconds**, someone in the U.S. has a stroke. A stroke happens when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is blocked or bursts. This interrupts blood flow, causing brain cells to die.

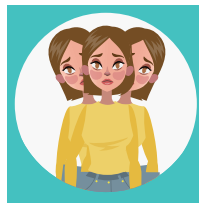
SPOTTING A STROKE



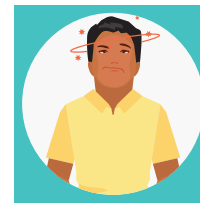
Numbness or weakness in the face, arm, or leg (especially on one side of the body)



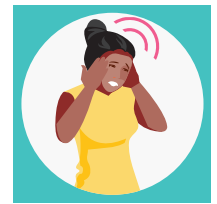
Trouble speaking or understanding others



Difficulty seeing



Trouble walking, dizziness, and loss of balance or coordination



Severe headache

If you notice any of the symptoms listed above, call **911** right away.

DID YOU KNOW?



Treatment is most effective within **3 hours** of the onset of symptoms.



Stroke is one of the **top 10** causes of death in children in the U.S.



An estimated **80%** of strokes can be avoided by making healthy lifestyle choices.

PREVENTING A STROKE



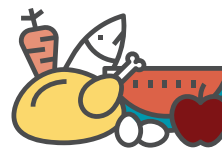
Get high blood pressure under control



Don't smoke



Manage your diabetes, if you have it



Eat a healthy diet



Exercise regularly

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. Developed by Krames. 5426M

WE'RE GOING FULL DIGITAL!

Starting with our Fall 2021 issue, look for your newsletter to arrive via email instead of in your mailbox. We hope you enjoy the new format!

Hungry for Normalcy? How to (Safely) Satisfy Your Craving to Dine Out

As the coronavirus pandemic continues, it's more and more tempting to get out and let someone else take over the cooking every once in a while. If you choose to indulge in your favorite restaurant fare, here's how to lower the risk.

→ **FIRST, THE GOOD NEWS: THERE'S NO EVIDENCE THAT COVID-19 SPREADS BY HANDLING OR EATING FOOD.** The bad news? Being in close quarters with others can be a high risk. With that in mind, a few smart choices can help keep you safe.

Dine Out (Literally!)

Choose outdoor dining spaces whenever possible. The airflow greatly reduces risk for virus transmission.

Stay Vigilant

After months of being cooped up, we are all ready to get back to normal. But now is not the time to let down your guard. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before and after sitting down to dine. Wear a mask as much as possible when not eating or drinking. And don't be embarrassed to call ahead and make sure the restaurant is following strict safety standards.

Keep Your Hands to Yourself

Many restaurants are using scannable QR codes so that you can access the menu from your own phone. One less thing to touch on the table! When available, you should also choose single-use items rather than shared containers for things like condiments. And when it comes to settling your bill, opt to pay using a cashless method.

Take It Home

Chances are, you aren't a stranger to takeout food. And while it's safer than in-person dining, you may be itching for something new. To mix things up, forgo eating in front of the television and set a fancy table at home. Or take your food to a park. Try restaurants you normally wouldn't think of for carryout—even upscale eateries are making it easy.

Lend Support

Restaurants need our support now more than ever. But eating out or ordering food isn't the only way you can help. To show your local businesses some love, buy gift cards to use later. Write a positive review online. Or, if you can, consider tipping a little extra. +

