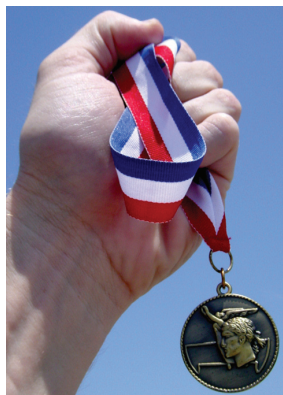


# TOP HEALTH<sup>®</sup>

The Health Promotion and Wellness Newsletter

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska** | UNIVERSITY-WIDE  
BENEFITS COMMITTEE

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## GAMES ON... Expand Your Field of Play

May the 2012 Olympic Games inspire you to have fun and move more.

The games are in full swing across the pond, with thousands of high-energy athletes ready to compete and inspire us to set our own physical goals. Why not harness the zeal of the games and expand your field of play for fun, better fitness and top health?

- ★ **View the games with friends and family.** Talk about the kinds of events you might like to try and then get started.
- ★ **Emphasize the fun factor.** Some 36 sporting events are featured at the Olympics. Pick from the lot or create an event on your own. Go biking, hiking, dancing or skating together.
- ★ **Design physical contests.** Challenge each other in jump rope, pingpong or a paddleboat tournament.

### Turn off the tube, turn on the action

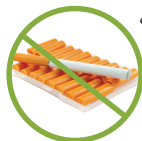
- 1 **Have a meeting** to choose regular times and days for exercise.
- 2 **List new or favorite activities** you want to try as a group.
- 3 **Turn off the tube.** Turn on the action!

What makes a winner is taking time every day to nurture the fitness spirit so that physical activity becomes a way of life.

**Let the games begin!**

## LONGEVITY CORNER

### STEER CLEAR OF E-CIGARETTES



“E-cigs” are nonflammable, battery-operated, nicotine delivery systems that resemble cigarettes. Companies promote them as safer than regular cigarettes and even as smoking-cessation aids. But the FDA has not conducted any studies substantiating these claims, and the FDA has also detected potential harmful chemicals in some of these products. Also alarming is the fact that there are currently no age restrictions on sales, so they can be purchased by teens. Smoke screen: Until there is more research on these products, steer clear of them and use approved methods to help you stop smoking.

~ Zorba Paster, MD



## Healthy Weight Headlines

Magazines and books are full of plans to lose weight, but what are the ways to avoid weight gain in the first place? **The average adult puts on about one pound per year without knowing why it happens or how to prevent it.** Several recent studies suggest ways to maintain a healthy weight for the long term:

1. **Pay attention to more than just total calories, fat or sugars.** Study participants who successfully prevented weight gain focused on eating healthier foods. These foods can positively affect hunger control, blood sugar levels and feelings of fullness.
2. **Improve the quality of carbohydrates in your diet** by reducing soda, sweets, starches (potatoes, white bread, potato chips) and refined grains (white rice, low-fiber cereals).
3. **Consume more whole foods** (fruits, vegetables, whole grains) and fewer processed foods (hot dogs, luncheon meats). You can generally spot a processed food by the long, complicated ingredient list on the label. Avoid foods whose first ingredient begins with “enriched.”
4. **Include some nuts and seeds in your diet** — though high in calories, some studies link them to better weight control. Nuts and seeds naturally feature healthier fats and vitamin E.
5. **Increase your physical activity** and decrease your screen time (TV, smartphone, tablet, computer). Wind down and relax before bedtime and sleep well for 7 to 9 hours.
6. **Eat healthier foods** and you may naturally start improving other eating behaviors, such as reducing portion sizes.

**Put it all together:** Though the impact of any one of these lifestyle changes is small, together they really add up. They provide a great prevention opportunity and show that a few changes can make a big difference.

**Keep up with vaccinations ... August is National Immunization Awareness Month. See other side for more.**

# HOW TO COMPRESS STRESS

Looking for ways to decrease stress? Try these researched relievers.



**Yoga** seems to help treat a number of stress-related conditions, including

depression, anxiety, high blood pressure and heart disease. Other calming practices, such as meditation and tai chi, seem to be beneficial as well.



**Acupuncture** may help reverse the effects of stress. Many people imagine

that this needle-based treatment would be uncomfortable, but in fact, acupuncture tends to be quite relaxing.



**Eating walnuts** may help reduce the negative impact

of stress on blood pressure. Remember that not all fat is bad: Some studies have suggested that the omega-3s found in nuts and fatty fishes may actually be good for you.



**Being more optimistic** may reduce your risk of heart disease.

So make a list of things you are successful at and look for more opportunities to feel skilled and fulfilled.

## ADHD or a Sleep Problem?



The diagnosis of ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) among children has risen dramatically in the past 10 years; some people even call it an epidemic. While ADHD certainly exists, some researchers believe that a subset of these children have another problem — sleep disorders.

**Sleep-deprived youngsters resemble those with ADHD:** hyperactive, moody, fidgety, obstinate, and struggling to focus and get along with peers. In a recent study, children with breathing problems (snoring, mouth breathing, apnea) were 40 to 100% more likely than normal breathers to exhibit behaviors resembling ADHD. Other children have had their ADHD diagnosis rescinded after the surgical removal of problematic adenoids and tonsils led to sleep and behavior improvements.

**Sleep experts say that losing an hour of needed sleep per night** — whether from a sleep disorder or staying up too late — can lead to ADHD-like behaviors.

**Sleep deprivation is common in today's kids but is easily overlooked.** Pediatricians often depend on parents to report sleep problems, but parents themselves may be uninformed about healthy sleep habits. Furthermore, doctors specializing in pediatric sleep disorders can be hard to find. When parents identify and address their child's sleep issues, however, the positive results can be dramatic.

**Wake-up call:** If you have concerns about your child's sleep or simply want to know how to help him or her get better-quality sleep, see [www.sleepforkids.org/html/problems.html](http://www.sleepforkids.org/html/problems.html).

Take time to care for yourself and develop your coping strategies — what's good for your mind can be good for your body.



**Vaccines aren't just for infants** — over time, protection from some vaccines starts to wear off and risks for other infections develop. Preteen and teen vaccines not only help protect young adults, but also help their friends, community and family members. See your health care provider for advice and [www.vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov) for additional information.

## How Does Beef Stack Up?



Beef lovers, rejoice: It appears that you may be able to eat a modest amount of beef (4 to 5 ounces) daily without raising your cholesterol. The key is eating very lean beef (top round, "select" grade, lean roast beef, chuck shoulder pot roast or 95% lean hamburger) as well as plenty of fruits and vegetables and low-fat dairy products. No more than 30% of calories should come from fat, with only 7% calories from saturated fat and not more than 200 mg of cholesterol. So enjoy your beef fix, but remember that a varied diet is best, so include fish, chicken or legumes in other meals.



Next time: Fantastic fall foods. Now check out the online toolkit below.

*"Life is not merely to be alive, but to be well." - Marcus Valerius Martial*



Smart moves for your personal wellness program are at [www.personalbest.com/extras/aug12tools](http://www.personalbest.com/extras/aug12tools).