



Can You Live Without Tobacco?

Breaking free of tobacco is a great achievement. For people who use it, tobacco becomes a very big part of their lives. So it takes a lot of physical and mental stamina to quit for good.

If you long to be free of tobacco, why not start now? The first step is to meet with your health care provider. Nicotine addiction is a chronic illness, and your provider will guide you through the cessation period. Discuss the multiple aids available to help you quit, including:

Nicotine replacement aids: The nicotine patch, gum, lozenge, nasal spray and inhaler help ease the physical symptoms of nicotine withdrawal.

Non-nicotine medicine: Two non-nicotine drugs, *bupropion* and *varenicline*, help reduce nicotine cravings.



Take a deep breath, and take the first step – on November 21, the Great American Smokeout, say *I quit*. Everyone loves a quitter.

What about e-cigarettes?
 >> Turn the page to learn more.

Get Past Your Weight-Loss Plateau



You've started exercising and eating right with great results. Then, after a few months, your body reaches a plateau and you stop losing weight.

Why? One theory: After performing the same activity for long periods, your body uses fewer calories than when you first started the activity, and it's harder to lose weight. To reach your goal weight, you need to continually update your fitness routine. Here are some tips:

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Blood Sugar Basics

Your body's main source of energy is the glucose or sugar in your blood. To help maintain a healthy blood glucose level, your body needs to properly use the hormone insulin. Without that control, you may develop type 2 diabetes, a disorder that can cause serious health problems.

Borderline diabetes is called prediabetes – it's diagnosed when blood glucose levels are moderately high but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. Having prediabetes is a wake-up call. However, you may not have any symptoms, so it's best to learn the risk factors:

- Excess weight, especially belly fat
- High blood pressure
- HDL cholesterol under 35
- Lack of exercise
- Family history of diabetes
- History of diabetes during pregnancy
- Ethnic background (African, Hispanic, Native or Asian American, Pacific Islander)



When should you be tested? If you're **over age 45**, ask your health care provider during a routine visit if you need a blood glucose test. If you're **younger than 45 and have any of the risk factors** listed above for diabetes and prediabetes, ask your provider about testing.

These 2 steps may cut your diabetes risk by half:

1. Lose 7% of your body weight (that's 14 pounds if you weigh 200).
2. Exercise moderately (such as brisk walking) 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.

Even if you can't get to your ideal body weight, losing just 10 to 15 pounds can improve your body's use of insulin – the key to healthy blood sugar.





Cold and Flu Rescue

How much do you know about those common upper respiratory illnesses – colds and flu? Here's an overview:

Symptoms: Cold and flu generally cause coughing, congestion, sore throat and unusual fatigue to some degree. Flu symptoms may start quickly, are more severe and often include fever, headache and muscle aches. The flu can last for days or weeks, while a cold can be kicked in a few days.

Treatment: Antiviral prescription medications may help relieve the flu if taken soon after symptoms start. For cold and flu, try over-the-counter symptom relievers such as medicated nasal spray or decongestants; pain relievers and fever reducers; and dextromethorphan for cough. **The best remedy:** Sleep longer than normal or stay in bed for at least a day.

Call your health care provider if you have persistent fever, coughing, congestion, trouble breathing, sore throat, or pain in your ear, glands, neck or sinuses. The flu can lead to pneumonia and other complications.

Stay home if you: have a fever, are in the early days of a virus (when you're most contagious), are coughing and sneezing a lot, or have diarrhea.

Get the flu vaccine. It is now recommended for virtually everyone past age 6 months.

To prevent infection, avoid touching your nose, eyes and mouth, and wash your hands after touching items used by others.



E-cigarettes: *Are they good or bad?* Many of them contain nicotine, which we all know is addictive. Some claim that they are safer than regular cigarettes but I'm not so sure. There is no firm research that shows they're safe. My opinion: Why substitute one unhealthy habit for another? Why not just quit and be done with it? If you smoke an e-cig you might just be tempted to go back to the "real" thing. – *Zorba Paster, MD*



Get Past Your **Weight-Loss** Plateau

>> *Continued from other side.*

Boost your cardio workout. Add brief intervals of higher-intensity exercise during your routine moderate workout. For example, speed walk for 5 minutes every 10 minutes during your walk.

Add 2 to 3 strength-training workouts a week. Strength building increases your muscle density and metabolism. Increasing your lean muscle mass will ultimately help you lose both fat and inches.

Vary your exercise activities. Regularly using a variety of muscles adds muscle mass, which raises your metabolism. Beyond the same old machine workout, for example, try swimming or racket sports.



“One way to get the most out of life is to look upon it as an adventure.” – William Feather



3 Nutrients:

Are You Getting Enough?

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

Even the best diet can fall short of certain key nutrients. These include iron, vitamin D and calcium. Here's what you need to know:

> **Iron** deficiency is most common in women, children and teenage girls.

Solution: To improve iron absorption, match plant-based iron-rich foods (leafy greens, legumes, nuts) with items that are high in vitamin C. For example, try spinach and strawberry salad or sweet pepper and kale stir-fry.

> **Vitamin D** may protect against osteoporosis, type 2 diabetes, hypertension and certain types of cancer. This vitamin is found in few foods, so deficiency is common.

Solution: Drinking fortified milk daily and eating a few servings of fish weekly help, but may not be enough. Discuss your vitamin D needs with your health care provider.

> **Calcium** keeps your bones healthy. In the U.S., teenage girls and adults older than age 50 are most likely to fall short of their calcium needs.

Solution: Include 3 to 4 servings of milk products each day. Try milk, low-fat cheese and yogurt. Or get calcium from leafy greens, canned salmon or sardines, and fortified milk alternatives.



Smart Moves toolkit is at www.personalbest.com/extras/Nov13tools.

Next Month: Vitamin D