Healthy Living

Staying Sharp
How to remain mentally fresh during the workday

Conquer Your Cravings
Strategies to control appetite

April 2019
A Special Supplement to

DAILY TIMES
The human body is a complex, efficient machine. One highly important component of that machine is the circulatory system, which sends blood, oxygen and nutrients throughout the body.

In perfectly healthy bodies, blood, oxygen and nutrients circulate throughout the body without issue. However, several conditions, including obesity and diabetes, can contribute to poor circulation, which is not a standalone condition but rather a byproduct of another serious health issue.

According to the health information site Healthline, when the circulatory system is not working at optimal capacity, people may experience tingling, numbness and throbbing or stinging pain in the limbs. Pain and muscle cramps also may result from poor circulation, the symptoms of which vary depending on the causes. For example, someone whose circulation issues are a result of peripheral artery disease may experience different symptoms than someone whose circulation has been compromised by diabetes.

Because issues affecting the circulatory system are complex, it’s important for men and women to learn how to address such issues if they suspect their systems have been compromised.

Visit your physician. Poor circulation results from various health issues, so people who think they are dealing with poor circulation should not try to address the issue on their own. Rather, the best way to improve circulation is to visit a physician the moment you note a symptom. Doctors will confirm if patients are experiencing circulation issues and diagnose what’s causing those issues. Doctors also will work with their patients to devise a course of treatment for the issue that’s causing their poor circulation.

If necessary, lose weight and keep it off. Obesity is one of the conditions that can contribute to poor circulation. So many people who are diagnosed with poor circulation may be advised to lose weight and keep the weight off once it’s been lost. A 2009 study published in the International Journal of Cardiology found that losing weight helped obese women improve their circulation. A healthy diet that includes fish like salmon that is high in omega-3 fatty acids, which have been shown to improve circulation, can help people lose weight and maintain healthy weights going forward.

Consider yoga. A 2014 review of an assortment of peer-reviewed studies found that yoga can have a positive impact on risk factors for cardiovascular disease. A low-impact exercise, yoga can compress and decompress veins, potentially improving circulation. It takes time to master yoga positions, but even beginners who cannot fully perform poses during a yoga regimen can benefit from doing the exercises to the best of their abilities.

Poor circulation is a byproduct of various conditions. Once a condition has been diagnosed, patients can help themselves by taking various steps to improve their circulation.

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People diagnosed with an underactive thyroid condition may have to make several changes to their lifestyles to feel well and maintain a healthy weight.

The thyroid is a tiny gland located in the neck that produces a hormone to regulate one’s metabolism, or the process that converts what a person eats and drinks into energy. With hypothyroidism, also known as an underactive thyroid, production of that thyroid hormone is insignificant, resulting in a dramatically slower metabolism.

The endocrinology health site Endocrine Web estimates approximately 10 million Americans have hypothyroidism. The reasons the thyroid gland falters vary. But the symptoms may include fatigue, weakness, weight gain or increased difficulty losing weight, hair loss, muscle aches, depression, and irritability.

Each of the side effects associated with thyroid conditions can be troublesome, but many people with thyroid issues struggle most with weight gain and their inability to keep weight off. The president of the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, R. Mack Harrell, MD, says to first visit a doctor, who can determine if a synthetic thyroid hormone medication can help. Regular exercise also can be an important part of the strategy to lose weight and manage other hypothyroidism symptoms.

Christian Nasr, MD, an endocrinologist with the Cleveland Clinic, advises his patients to wait a few weeks before exercising so that their condition is controlled with medication. After that waiting period is over, gradually easing back into exercise can help with the fatigue and weight gain that may not abate with thyroid medications.

The online health resource Everyday Health advises a program of low-impact aerobic exercises and strength training. The aerobics will raise the heart rate without putting too much pressure on the joints. These exercises include using a stationary bicycle or a low-impact elliptical machine. Pilates and gentle yoga can improve core muscles and help alleviate joint pain as well.

Incorporating strength training into a workout can help build muscle mass, which burns calories, even when a person is at rest. That can be essential for a person finding it difficult to control his or her weight due to a sluggish metabolism.

Additional benefits of exercising are improved mood and reduced inflammation. Exercising can release endorphins into the body to help fight off depression. Also, researchers from the University of California-San Diego School of Medicine found a single 20-minute session of exercise was enough to trigger something called sympathoadrenergic activation, which suppresses the production of monocyctic cytokines in the body that produce an inflammatory response in the immune system. That means exercise can keep inflammation in check.

Hypothyroidism is a common condition that produces various unwanted side effects. However, with proper care and exercise, many symptoms can be managed effectively.
Medical Terminology Career Exploration
Professionalism
Respiratory Therapist
Radiology Technician
CPR/First Aid training
Use of Medical Equipment
Mental Health Technician
Emergency Medical Technician
Assistant Pharmacy Technician
Dental Hygienist
Surgery Technician
Massage Therapist
Dietetic Technician
Radiologist
Nurse (LPN & RN)
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Professionalism

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Nursing Assistant/Home Care Aide
Phlebotomist/EKG Technician

Career Pathways to
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Dietetic Technician
Veterinarian
Surgery Technician
Veterinarian Assistant
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Respiratory Therapist
Occupational Therapy Assistant
Mental Health Technician

Phlebotomy

Classes Begin: June 17, 2019
Pharmacy Technician
Classes Begin: July 21, 2019

Did you know?
Brief breaks during the workday can dramatically improve one’s ability to focus on a task.

A 2011 study published in the journal Cognition found that brief mental breaks can improve focus on a prolonged task. The study’s authors tested participants’ ability to focus on a repetitive computerized task for 50 minutes under various conditions. The control group performed the task without breaks or diversions. The switch group and non-switch group memorized four digits before performing the task and were directed to respond if they saw one of the digits on the screen while performing the task. The switch group was the only group to be presented with the digits twice during the experiment, and both groups were tested on their memory of the digits at the end of the task. Most participants’ performance declined considerably over the course of the 50-minute task. However, the performance of those in the switch group did not decline at all, as the two brief breaks to respond to the digits allowed them to maintain their focus throughout the experiment. The researchers behind the study concluded that the switch group’s performance was steady because the brain is built to detect and respond to change, and its performance will actually suffer if it must maintain prolonged attention on a single task without taking a break. Professionals with a lot on their plates may see their performance improve by taking frequent mental breaks throughout the workday.

Classes Begin: April 29, 2019

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Many people periodically have bad days when they just seem to be in a bad mood. When a bad mood isn’t short-lived, this might be a potential indicator of depression. Depression is a common mental disorder that, according to the World Health Organization, affects more than 300 million people across the globe. The WHO notes that despite the fact that there are known and highly effective treatments for depression, fewer than half of those suffering from depression receive such treatments. Furthermore, in many countries, fewer than 10 percent of people with depression receive treatment. Learning about depression and how to recognize its symptoms may compel people battling it to seek treatment for this very common and treatable disorder.

Why do I have depression?
Everyone has a bad day here or there, but people with depression may wonder why theirs are more than just a bad day. The WHO notes that depression is a byproduct of a complex interaction of social, psychological and biological factors. Exposure to adverse life events, such as unemployment, the death of a loved one or psychological trauma, can increase peoples’ risk of developing depression. Depression also may be caused by physical conditions. The WHO says cardiovascular disease can lead to depression.

What are the symptoms of depression?
The Mayo Clinic notes that one in 10 people whose depression goes untreated commit suicide. That only highlights the importance of recognizing the symptoms of depression and acting once any have been identified or suspected. Symptoms can include:
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details and making decisions
- Fatigue
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness and helplessness
- Pessimism and hopelessness
- Insomnia, early-morning wakefulness or sleeping too much
- Irritability
- Restlessness
- Loss of interest in things once deemed pleasurable, including sex
- Overeating or appetite loss
- Aches, pains, headaches, or cramps that won’t go away
- Digestive problems that don’t get better, even with treatment
- Persistent sad, anxious or “empty” feelings
- Suicidal thoughts or attempts

Anyone who has exhibited any of the aforementioned symptoms or even those who haven’t but suspect they might be suffering from depression should visit a physician immediately.

The WHO notes there are a variety of treatments available to people who have been diagnosed with depression, and doctors will determine which might be the best for each patient. To make that determination, doctors may inquire about the duration and severity of symptoms as well as family history and whether or not the patient has a history of drug or alcohol abuse. Depression is a common mental disorder that too often goes undiagnosed. Seeking help the moment symptoms are detected or suspected can help people overcome the disorder.
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Kingsdaughtershealth.com
Explore the benefits of HIIT

Many new programs are available at fitness centers that allow fitness-minded individuals to test their mettle. Recently, one of the more popular fitness regimens is HIIT, and it’s probably available at a fitness center near you.

HIIT is an acronym for High Intensity Interval Training. The American College of Sports Medicine says HIIT held steady among the top fitness trends for 2017. The crux of HIIT is sustained, intense exercise followed by active recovery periods. WebMD says that HIIT can be used with any type of cardio workout, including rowing, jumping rope, stair climbing, and more. Many gyms also build programs around HIIT that may include “boot camp” workouts that utilize equipment or body weight exercises to burn calories.

A typical HIIT training session lasts about 30 minutes. Workouts are performed at 80 to 90 percent of a person’s maximal heart rate, which is the number of times the heart will beat in a minute without overexerting itself. Recovery periods are not entirely rest. They tend to be shorter than active periods, and come in at around 40 to 50 percent of the maximal heart rate. The workout will alternate between the working and recovery periods.

HIIT workouts can be effective at boosting metabolism and helping people burn calories faster. They also help to develop physical endurance. The science behind the workouts has to do with EPOC, or excess post-exercise oxygen consumption. The fitness lifestyle resource Daily Burn says that HIIT will help burn more fat and calories than regular steady workouts because EPOC is an oxygen shortage in the body that occurs during the intense portions of the HIIT workouts. During recovery, the body will ask for more oxygen, creating an afterburn and a metabolic disturbance. The fitness guide Fitness Blender states that the intense training will result in the body burning calories at a higher rate for up to 48 to 72 hours after exercising.

People may see greater results by doing HIIT workouts three times a week for half of the duration than they would if they were performing more typical workouts more frequently. For those whose schedules are already jam-packed, HIIT can be a more efficient way of exercising.

HIIT requires a strong baseline fitness level, so beginners or those who have been out of the gym for some time are urged to start slowly. Also, since HIIT causes high demand on the heart and respiratory systems, it’s essential to discuss the regimen with a doctor to find out if HIIT is a smart choice depending on your medical history.

Those considering participating in HIIT workouts are urged to discuss the possibilities with a knowledgeable trainer at a neighborhood gym.
Energy levels tend to ebb and flow throughout a typical workday. A cup of coffee may provide some caffeine-infused spark in the morning, but a big lunch can squash energy later in the afternoon.

Waning mental sharpness as the workday progresses can compromise productivity, making it more difficult for workers to complete projects on time. That, in turn, can contribute to stress. In fact, in its “2017 Stress in America” survey, the American Psychological Association found that 58 percent of Americans say work is a significant source of stress.

Staying mentally fresh during a workday can pay a host of benefits, and the following are just a few ways to maintain mental focus until quitting time.

**Exercise regularly.** The physical benefits of routine exercise are well documented. But even the most ardent fitness enthusiasts may not realize just how big an impact physical activity is having on their brains. The Harvard Medical School notes that exercise stimulates regions of the brain that release a chemical called brain-derived neurotrophic factor, or BDNF, which rewires memory circuits so they can function better. A stronger memory can help workers recall project details and deadlines more easily, even as the workday draws to a close.

**Avoid the “quick fix.”** Relying on a beverage or snack to provide a quick mental boost may end up compromising your mental sharpness. Foods and beverages that are high in sugar may provide an immediate energy boost, but that spike is almost instantly followed by a crash that can adversely affect your mental sharpness. Stick to healthy snacks, such as fruits and vegetables, and avoid late afternoon cups of coffee, which studies have shown make it harder to fall asleep at night, thereby compromising your energy levels the next day.

**Take a walk outdoors.** Spending some time outdoors during a lunch break, or even a quick, post-lunch stroll around the office grounds, can provide a break for the brain. That break can help the brain refocus, improving productivity as a result. One great way to get outdoors during busy workdays is to conduct meetings outside when the weather permits. This gives everyone a chance to recharge their brains in the great outdoors, and few people would prefer a dusty conference room to a nearby park or picnic area outdoors.

Various strategies can help working professionals maintain their mental sharpness throughout the workday.
Topics to discuss before going under the knife

Many people will find themselves on a surgeon’s table at one point or another. Professional athletes who get injured frequently and, of course, surgeons may be accustomed to the surgical wings of hospitals, but the general public has no such familiarity. Perhaps due to that lack of familiarity, many people are nervous before an impending surgery. Asking the right questions prior to the procedure can calm those nerves and help people approach pending surgeries with confidence rather than fear.

**Anesthesia**

Much of the fear people have in regard to surgery surrounds anesthesia. Few people want to be put completely under, but some surgeries may require that. General anesthesia affects the entire body, and this is the type administered during surgeries that require patients to be unconscious. Regional anesthesia affects a large area of the body, while local anesthesia only numbs a small part. Knowing which type of anesthesia will be administered during a surgery can prepare patients and their families in advance, and may even calm nerves.

**Length of surgery**

Patients and their families often want to know how long surgeries will last. Patients should discuss this with their physicians and surgeons, especially if family and friends will be in the waiting room while a surgery is performed. If surgeons note there’s a possibility that a surgery will be extended after it begins, patients should let family and friends know this, even if they don’t want to worry them. People in the waiting room will grow concerned and fearful, possibly unnecessarily, if a surgery is not completed within a certain amount of time.

**Pain**

Pain might be a side effect of surgery. Knowing this in advance won’t raise alarm bells if patients are discharged and begin to experience pain upon arriving home. Ask surgeons if pain is a side effect of your surgery, and where than pain is likely to be felt and for how long. Many people are prescribed opioids to address pain after surgery, but such medications can be addictive. Ask about opioid alternatives, as well as any non-prescription relaxation techniques or therapies that may help manage pain.

**Blood clots**

Pain is not the only potential side effect of surgery. Some surgeries can increase patients’ risk of developing deep vein thrombosis, a type of blood clot that can travel to the lungs and block blood flow. Sometimes referred to as DVT, deep vein thrombosis can be deadly, though it’s often treatable when caught quickly. Certain factors, including age, whether or not you’re a smoker and a history of clots, can increase a person’s risk of developing DVT after surgery. Blood thinners may be prescribed as a precautionary measure. These are just a handful of topics to discuss with a physician prior to surgery. Patients should not hesitate to ask as many questions as they need to before going in for surgery.

**Fats**

Fat has a bad reputation. Many people hear the words “fat” or “fats” and immediately think the worst. Fats go by many names, including lipids, fatty acids, vegetable fats, animal fats, and oils. While some fats can be harmful when consumed in excess, many fats are actually helpful to the body. Educating oneself about the different types of fats can make for a more well-rounded diet.

**Saturated fats:** These are solid at room temperature and tend to come from animal products and processed foods. A large intake of saturated fats can increase a person’s risk for cardiovascular disease and stroke.

**Monounsaturated fats:** This “healthy” fat may lower LDL cholesterol and keep HDL cholesterol at higher levels when saturated fats are held in check.

**Polyunsaturated fats:** These fats also are considered good for cardiovascular health and are commonly known as the omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids that are found in certain seeds, fatty fish and nuts.

**Trans fats:** Trans fats are synthetically manufactured by adding hydrogen to liquid vegetable oils to make them more solid. They are not good for a person’s health, but they have been widely used in the past because they tend to be stable and inexpensive and can improve shelf life of processed products.

It is important to distinguish between helpful and harmful fats so a body gets the healthy fuel it needs.
Hunger can be a formidable foe, especially for people attempting to lose weight. When hunger strikes, various appetite-control strategies can help people avoid overeating or eating during those times when boredom is more to blame than an empty belly.

**Eat slowly.** When a person eats, a series of signals are sent to the brain from digestive hormones secreted by the gastrointestinal tract. These signals produce a feeling of pleasure and satiety in the brain, but it can take a while for the brain to receive them. By chewing slowly, people can give the signals more time to reach their brains, potentially preventing them from overeating.

**Choose the right snacks.** The right snacks can make it easier to eat more slowly. Instead of reaching for potato chips or pretzels, both of which can be eaten quickly and picked up by the handful, choose snacks that are both healthy and require a little work. Carrots dipped in hummus or baked tortilla chips with low-fat salsa or bean dip are low-calorie snacks that also require some work between bites. The time it takes to dip between bites affords more time for the digestive tract to release signals to the brain that you’re full.

**Reach for fiber first.** Another way to conquer hunger without overeating is to reach for fiber before eating other parts of your meal. Vegetables are rich in fiber, but since veggies are often served as side dishes, many people tend to eat them only after they’ve eaten their main courses. That can contribute to overeating. Fiber fills you up, so by eating the high-fiber portions of your meal first, you’re less likely to overeat before your brain receives the signals that your stomach is full. Consider eating vegetables as an appetizer or, if the entire meal is served at once, clear your plate of vegetables before diving into the main course or other side dishes.

**Drink water.** Perhaps the best, and least expensive, way to control appetite and ensure you don’t overeat is to drink more water. A 2010 study funded by the Institute for Public Health and Water Research that included 48 adults between the ages of 55 and 75 found that people who drank two eight-ounce glasses of water right before a meal consumed 75 to 90 fewer calories during the ensuing meal than study participants who did not consume water prior to their meals. Over the course of 12 weeks, participants who drank water before meals three times per day lost roughly five pounds more than those who did not increase their water intake.

Controlling appetite does not have to be a complex undertaking. In fact, some of the simplest strategies can be highly effective.

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