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A Special Supplement to
DAILY TIMES

HEALTH & Wellness

Start exercising
How to start exercising at home

Managing cholesterol
It starts with what you eat

Safety & Strength
How to introduce your teenager to weight training
HEALTH & WELLNESS

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How to introduce teenagers to weight training

Strength training is an important component of a healthy lifestyle. According to the Mayo Clinic, strength training helps people reduce their body fat, increase their lean muscle mass and efficiently burn calories. In fact, in its 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans report, the Department of Health and Human Services recommends all adults perform moderate or greater-intensity muscle strengthening activities on two or more days per week.

Recognizing the benefits of strength training, many parents encourage their teenagers to begin strength training regimens. If some scoff at the notion of promoting strength training to youngsters whose bodies are still developing, they shouldn’t, as the DHHS recommends children and adolescents between the ages of 6 and 17 include muscle-strengthening exercises as part of their daily physical activity on at least three days per week.

A teenagers’ introduction to weight training should be different than an adult’s. So adults who began weight training regimens in their 20s after their bodies had fully matured should not ask their teenage children or teenagers in their care to approach weight training in the same way they did. In fact, Stanford Children’s Health notes that the human skeleton isn’t mature until a person reaches his or her early 20s. As a result, lifting too much weight before the body reaches that maturity point can stress joints and ligaments and may even separate growth plates.

Safety should be a priority when introducing children to weight training. Stanford Children’s Health even notes that it’s important for adults and teenagers to recognize that weight training is different from weightlifting and bodybuilding. Weight training is an integral part of a total fitness regimen that aims to build musculoskeletal strength, while weightlifting and bodybuilding are competitive sports that focus on high-intensity training. Make sure teenagers understand this distinction, as enthusiastic teens might conduct some research on their own. If they are unaware that weight training and weightlifting are different, they might be risking injury and long-term consequences because they’re following advice designed for competitive weightlifters rather than for teenagers interested in weight training.

Supervision is another precaution parents should take when introducing teenagers to weight training. According to Stanford Children’s Health, a good weight-training program for teens will focus on toning muscles with light weights. Teens should never aspire to “bulk up,” as their bodies are not ready to handle the training necessary to build all that muscle. Unfortunately, teens might feel pressure to add bulk if they see classmates or adults in the gym who are considerably larger. That’s why it’s important for parents to go to the gym with their teens during weight training sessions.

A gradual approach is also an effective way to help teen bodies acclimate to weight training. Encourage teens to start with simple body weight exercises, such as push-ups, before moving on to free weights and weight machines. Stanford Children’s Health notes that teen strength training programs should emphasize proper techniques and work different muscle groups on different days. Two to three weight training sessions per week on alternating days should be enough for teen bodies.

Weight training can help teenagers build strong bodies. When paired with supervision, patience and safety, weight training programs can help teens grow into strong adults.

What is OAT MILK?

People avoiding milk due to an allergy, intolerance, vegan lifestyle, or other preference have many dairy alternatives to choose from at their nearby supermarket. Almond milk, soy milk, coconut milk, and cashew milk are widely known, but what about oat milk? Oat milk is quickly gaining steam at coffee houses and is poised to become a popular alternative dairy beverage. Varieties of oat milk started showing up in stores in 2018. The foodies at Bon Appétit say oat milk is formed when steel cut oats or whole groats are soaked in water, blended and then strained. The resulting “milk” is purported to taste like the cream that sits atop a bowl of porridge. Because oats are more ubiquitous than nuts, oat milk can be a more sustainable option, as nut supplies do not need to be obliterated to produce milk-based products. Oat milk may have more calories than almond milk, but where it shines is in fiber content. Almond milk has around 1 gram of fiber per 8-ounce glass, while oat milk has 2 grams per glass. Just be aware that some varieties of oat milk are sweetened and that can add up to high sugar amounts.
Millions of people across the globe deal with conditions that affect the skin and hair. Acne is a skin and hair ailment that, according to the American Academy of Dermatology, is the most common skin condition in the United States. But what if the foods people eat could affect the health of their hair and skin? There is evidence that they can. Foods that contain certain nutrients, phytochemicals and enzymes may help people develop healthier hair and skin.

**Blueberries:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture gave blueberries its top ranking for antioxidant activity. The antioxidants in blueberries neutralize free radicals and protect people from premature aging, which can help the skin look younger and more vibrant.

**Eggs:** Eggs are great sources of protein and biotin, which are two nutrients that may help promote hair growth. The health and wellness information site Healthline says biotin is essential for the production of a hair protein called keratin. Fatty fish: Fatty fish, such as salmon, are high in omega-3 fatty acids. Ciara Foy, a Toronto-based holistic nutritionist, says about 3 percent of the hair shaft is made up of omega-3 fatty acids. They’re also found in cell membranes and in the natural oils that keep the scalp and other areas of the skin hydrated.

**Red bell peppers:** These peppers contain more vitamin C than oranges. According to dermatologist Dr. Julia Carwell with Compass Dermatology, vitamin C is an antioxidant precursor to collagen production, so consuming more vitamin C through foods can neutralize free radicals that could damage skin.

**Spinach:** Trade lettuce for spinach, which is rich in calcium, iron, magnesium, omega-3 fatty acids, and much more. These nutrients can be the building blocks of healthy skin and hair.

**Oysters:** Nutritionist and author Lisa Drayer says oysters are good sources of zinc, which aids in skin cell renewal and repair.

**Coconut:** Coconut water is great for hydration and contains potassium, an electrolyte that moves nutrients into the cells. Coconut oil also can be used to boost hair health as a pre-wash conditioning treatment.

The secret to beautiful skin and hair may be hiding in plain sight at your local supermarket.

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**How exercise benefits your heart**

Improved health is a primary motivator among people who routinely exercise. Exercise can help people feel better about themselves and their appearance, and it has considerable effects on various parts of the body, including the heart.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading killer of both men and women in the United States. Exercise can be one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk for cardiovascular issues like heart attack, high cholesterol and more. In fact, cardiologists at the New England Baptist Hospital say exercise is not only a risk preventative, but also a healing balm of sorts for heart health.

Exercise can help the heart become more efficient and more capable of pumping blood throughout the body, says the health experts behind Kaiser Permanente health plans. Even light to moderate exercise can be highly effective at improving heart health.

Harvard Medical School says exercise also promotes positive physiological changes, such as encouraging the heart’s arteries to dilate more readily. Exercise also can help with the body’s sympathetic nervous system (which controls heart rate and blood pressure) to be less reactive.

Ischemic preconditioning is another way that exercise can potentially benefit the heart. According to a 2017 article in JAMA Cardiology, heart disease patients who exercised found that exercise could trigger short periods of ischemia, or reduced blood flow to the heart. After resting for a few minutes, these people saw improved performance when they renewed exercise and got their heart rates up. It is believed that small doses of IPC can help the heart adapt more readily with ischemia and avoid a major response issue down the road. Those at the Cardiovascular Performance Program at Harvard-affiliated Massachusetts General Hospital found that IPC could reduce damage from heart attack by as much as 50 percent.

Physical activity also allows better blood flow in the small blood vessels around the heart, potentially preventing clogs that can lead to heart attacks. Furthermore, there is some evidence that exercise can help the body grow more blood vessel branches so there are additional routes blood can take if a usual path is blocked by fatty deposits or narrow arteries.

Johns Hopkins Medical Center says exercise also works like a beta-blocker medication that can slow the heart rate naturally to alleviate hypertension. It also can raise levels of HDL, the good cholesterol in the body, helping to improve overall cholesterol levels.

There are several reasons why exercise is important to heart health. It’s never too late to get with a fitness regimen to prevent or reverse cardiac episodes.
Get heart-healthy with a DASH diet

The DASH diet is characterized by an emphasis on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein sources.

Managing cholesterol starts with what you eat

High blood pressure affects more than a billion people around the world. The American Heart Association says an estimated 103 million adults in the United States, nearly half of all men and women in the country, have hypertension. Statistics Canada estimates that around 18 percent of Canadians aged 12 and older have high blood pressure. While medication and lifestyle changes can help reduce blood pressure, a modified diet also can work wonders.

The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension diet, often referred to as “DASH,” is an approach to eating that is designed to help treat or prevent hypertension, according to the Mayo Clinic. The diet was developed in the 1990s by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, which is part of the National Institutes of Health. The DASH does not require special foods, but makes recommendations on choices that can alleviate high blood pressure. The diet recommends eating vegetables, fruits and whole grains. Fat-free or low-fat dairy products, fish, poultry, beans, nuts, and vegetable oils are also included. Individuals adhering to the DASH diet should limit foods high in saturated fat, including fatty meats and tropical oils. Sugar-sweetened beverages and other sweets should be limited, too. When consuming foods, the idea is to stay within 1,500 to 2,300 milligrams of sodium.

In addition to reducing blood pressure, the DASH diet can lead to weight loss and even reduce adherents’ cancer risk, advises the health resource Healthline.

To help cut back on sodium, DASH guidelines advise using sodium-free spices to add flavor to foods. A person also can rinse canned foods to reduce salt or buy products that say sodium-free or low-sodium. Because no-salt foods can seem bland to those accustomed to salt, the Mayo Clinic suggests gradually cutting back on salted products until the taste buds can get used to less salty foods that fit within the DASH diet guidelines.

Combining the DASH diet with exercise is a great way to reduce blood pressure even more naturally.

Hypertension is a problem that can have lasting effects if not addressed. The DASH diet is one way to keep blood pressure levels in a healthy range.

High cholesterol, particularly high levels of “bad” cholesterol, is a risk for heart disease. The Mayo Clinic says that high cholesterol also can increase risk for heart attack. Understanding cholesterol and how to control it can help people live longer, healthier lives.

Cholesterol is a waxy substance that comes from two main sources. It is produced naturally by the liver and is obtained by eating certain foods, primarily animal products like meat, dairy and eggs. When these foods are consumed, the liver makes more cholesterol than it normally would, says the American Heart Association.

Harvard Medical School says that making certain food choices can help lower cholesterol levels. Some foods help prevent cholesterol from forming, while others lower low-density lipoprotein, also referred to as “LDL” or “bad” cholesterol. Some foods increase the amount of high-density lipoprotein, also known as “HDL” or “good” cholesterol. Still other foods block the body from absorbing cholesterol.

Because food and cholesterol are so closely linked, dietary changes can have a profound impact on people diagnosed with high levels of bad cholesterol. The following are some changes such individuals can implement.

Increase soluble fiber. Soluble fiber is found in oatmeal and other whole grains, flax, apples, legumes, and beans. Because soluble fiber can’t be broken down, it goes through the body and bloodstream like a giant mop, collecting bile generated to digest fats. The fiber and the fat-soaked bile are then excreted in the stool. According to Healthline, bile is made from cholesterol, and when the liver needs to make more of it to digest fat, it does so by pulling cholesterol out of the bloodstream, naturally reducing cholesterol levels as a result.

Eliminate trans fats. Trans fats, or those foods listed on labels primarily as hydrogenated oils, can raise overall cholesterol levels. The Food and Drug Administration has banned the use of partially hydrogenated vegetable oils by Jan. 1, 2021.

Eat more fatty fish. Harvard Medical School says that eating fish two or three times a week can lower LDL by replacing meat and by delivering LDL-lowering omega-3 fats to the body. Omega-3s reduce triglycerides in the bloodstream and also protect the heart by helping to prevent the onset of abnormal heart rhythms.

Use vegetable oils. Liquid vegetable oils, like canola or soybean, can be used in place of solid fats like butter or lard when cooking. Choose low-fat dairy. Substitute the low- or no-fat varieties of milk and cheeses instead of high-fat versions.

Dietary changes can make a big difference when it comes to reducing cholesterol.
A healthy diet and an active lifestyle are great ways to achieve a healthy weight and good overall health. Many people no doubt associate exercise with fitness centers and gym memberships. While gyms certainly are effective places to break a sweat, exercising at home can be an effective way to get fit as well.

Working out at home may require some creativity, as even homeowners with gyms in their basements may not have as much equipment at their disposal as they would at a local fitness center.

**Body weight exercises**

- Body weight exercises include push-ups, planks, squats, and lunges. Alternating incline and positioning of the body when performing some of these exercises is a great way to work various muscle groups. Body weight exercises do not necessarily require equipment, and that may disappoint some people. That’s because, with no added weight — and only one’s own body weight to provide resistance — it’s difficult for a person to challenge himself or herself effectively and gradually build up progress.

**Get outdoors for cardio**

A mix of cardiovascular activity, which puts a strain on the heart and lungs to build up stamina, can help shave off the pounds when paired with strength training exercises. Take to the great outdoors near home to get in a good cardio workout.

- Rally Health, a digital, data-based health advisory company, says that walking can constitute a cardio workout if one goes at a brisk pace of around three miles per hour. Walking on an incline also can constitute vigorous exercise that’s on par with running or biking, particularly when it’s a steep hill.

- Home-based cardio workouts also can include cycling, swimming in a backyard pool or playing a pickup sports game with the kids.

**Set up a home gym**

- With a few barbells, dumbbells and a weight bench, it’s easy to create a home gym in a basement or garage. Extra equipment, such as TRX resistance training equipment or an elliptical machine, can be added to make the gym more complete.

- A home gym also can be a place to do strength and stretching exercises like yoga or pilates.

- Many people find that they can effectively workout at home with little to no equipment necessary. With such convenience, individuals may find they make more time for exercise, which is an important component of a healthy lifestyle.
Running is a way of life for many individuals. When others witness just how fit and content some runners seem to be, they may want to follow suit.

Running has many health benefits. In a 2015 study published in Neuropharmacology, researchers discovered that running can cause the same kind of neurochemical adaptations in brain reward pathways as some addictive drugs. Runners can get a happy “high” from the sport. Running also can help a person lose weight or maintain a healthy weight. Runner’s World magazine indicates that regular running exercise boosts the afterburn, also known as excess post oxygen consumption, or the number of calories one burns after exercise.

Getting started with running is not as simple as lacing up one’s sneakers and hitting the road. To be safe, prospective runners can consider these tips.

Start with the gear. Wear comfortable clothing and shoes so you can run without discomfort. Choose a running shoe that has support but also at least half an inch of space between the big toe and the end of the shoe to allow for proper foot movement.

Start gradually. You may need to walk before you can run, just as babies crawl before they walk. Forget about establishing distance or timed trials. Rather, it’s more important to just get outside (or indoors) and run. Matthew Meyer, a certified trainer in New York, says a good beginning running target is 20 minutes, three days a week. Gradually increase the number of days and minutes spent running as you develop endurance.

Try running slower. Beginners need to start out slowly to avoid injury. However, running more slowly is effective for seasoned runners as well. Slow miles can help a person enjoy running as a sport.

Take more steps. Develop good form to reduce stress on the body. When studying elite runners, most take around 180 steps per minute, which is roughly 30 more steps than amateurs. Short, quick steps mean the feet spend less time in contact with the ground, leading to smaller impacts with each contact. Running in a way that ensures you land on your midfoot with light steps is another technique to consider.

Running is a healthy, beneficial pastime. Getting started requires the right gear and some patience.
Have you heard of “rhabdo”? No, it’s not the latest superfood seed imported from the heart of the rainforest. Also dubbed the “spinning disease,” rhabdo, short for rhabdomyolysis, is a serious condition known to the medical world for years, but is only recently garnering more widespread attention thanks to the high-impact fitness craze.

According to the Harvard Medical School, rhabdo is a rare condition that occurs when muscle cells burst and leak their contents into the blood stream. This can cause kidney injury, dark or brown urine, weakness, and muscle soreness. Trauma, medication and drug or alcohol misuse can contribute to rhabdo, but so can intense physical activity.

The Mayo Clinic states that rhabdo has been seen in extreme athletes, such as weight lifters and marathon runners. Rhabdo also can afflict people new to fitness regimens who are attempting to push themselves too far, too quickly.

According to Dr. Leslie Hamlett, a nephrology specialist at Freeman Health System in Missouri, she’s not surprised that those participating in intense workouts have been experiencing rhabdo. Dr. Hamlett feels that athletes crave the pain and burn — equating it to a job well done. However, the earliest symptoms of rhabdo mimic those of a really tough workout, making them easy to overlook.

The following tips can help people reduce their risk of developing rhabdomyolysis.

- Avoid alcohol and drug abuse.
- Seek prompt medical help after an accident or muscle trauma.
- Do not work out in excessive heat.
- Stay hydrated throughout a workout and attempt to maintain a normal body temperature. Fluids with electrolytes can be beneficial.
- When working out, gradually increase intensity, whether you’re a seasoned athlete or a beginner.

Rhabdo is a serious medical condition that those engaging in extreme workouts should familiarize themselves with early on. Although rare, the condition is serious enough to warrant caution while exercising.

Rhabdomyolysis is a rare and dangerous condition that has recently been affecting extreme athletes.