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WHAT'S YOUR BRAIN'S AGE? THE SCIENCE OF A

YOUNGER MIND



YUM! 2022 HEALTHY SNACK AWARDS

WHEN A GUT ISSUE GETS SERIOUS

MYTHS ABOUT NO-MEAT DIETS ORDINARY CHEMICALS THAT PUT WOMEN IN DANGER

PREVENTION

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WHICH WOULD YOU PICK UP?



I'd love to get you in on a big decision we make every month. We have to choose what's going to be on the cover—a fun part of my job, but also a fairly complicated one. There are tons of questions I have to ask, such as: Which article will we highlight? What words will explain it best? What picture will grab your attention? Which combo will make you excited to read *Prevention* as soon as it gets delivered—or inspire you to buy it at the store?

Above are three for this issue that didn't end up making the big time. Creative Director Jarred Ford made these mock-ups after we'd done a lot of brainstorming with Visual Director Bruce Perez, but the three of us never make the final decision alone. We show our ideas to whomever we can snag for an opinion: the rest of the staff, our bosses, people at other magazines in our company, family members. Last month I showed a couple of options to a random neighbor who was in an elevator with me—I'd been stewing on it and there he was, so I just pulled out my phone and got his quick take.

But this magazine is for *you*, not necessarily that guy in the elevator though he did seem to enjoy being asked! So, which would *you* have picked? You can take a super-quick poll at prevention.com/may-cover-

poll, or email your thoughts to letters@prevention.com. I can't wait to hear—it'll help me





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PULSE

PREVENTION

Say Hello to Your New Favorite Supergreen

One pretty backyard weed is actually a totally edible nutritional powerhouse and tasty too! Purslane grows low to the ground; its sturdy, smooth leaves look a bit like succulents and are loaded with omega-3s, vitamin A, iron, magnesium, potassium, calcium, and antioxidants. The greens, which have a mild taste and a slight crunch, are best eaten raw and give a lovely flavor, texture, and nutrient boost when added to sandwiches and salads or used as a topping for omelets and tacos. Look for purslane at farmers' markets, if not in your yard!

KRISTIN DUVALL/STOCKSY.

This Season's Bug Repellent: Your Outfit

You might want to assess your summer wardrobe—it could help prevent you from being eaten by mosquitoes. Skeeters seem to be drawn to certain colors, found a new study in *Nature Communications*.



When University of Washington researchers placed mosquitoes in a test chamber with a colored dot at the bottom and sprayed carbon dioxide inside (when we exhale, this is what attracts the buggers), they flew toward dots that were red, orange, black, or cyan (a teal-like shade) and ignored ones that were green, blue, purple, or white. When CO₂ wasn't sprayed, the mosquitoes ignored all colors. Scientists say these findings could help develop better deterrent methods. But for now, it can't hurt to use this info for your own protection and deck yourself out in hues that may keep you from being bitten.

Taking On Sugar



Plenty of kids love sugary drinks, and they're a big driver of childhood obesity—which can snowball and lead to the development of other health issues like high blood pressure, sleep apnea, type 2 diabetes, and more. One way to address the problem is to get parents to buy fewer beverages for their kiddos, and researchers from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill think they may have discovered a tool that could help: adding pictures to labels. A lab was set up to resemble a convenience store, and a diverse group of parents of children ages 2 to 12 were invited to

HELP FOR SUGAR LOVERS



Looking for ways to cut your family's sugar intake? Our downloadable guide *Sugar Detox Made Easy*, with tips, recipes, and more, is available exclusively to members of **Prevention Premium** at **prevention** .com/sugar-detox.

JOIN TO GET ACCESS prevention.com/join

"shop" for a drink, a snack, and a household item. Some shoppers saw sugary drinks with pictorial warnings about type 2 diabetes and heart disease risk on the bottles, and another group saw shelves of sweet drinks with just a barcode and no warning. Pictorial warnings led to a 17% reduction in sugary drink purchases, and a survey revealed that the warnings also made parents feel more in control of healthy eating decisions.

THE SCIENCE OF BEAUTY A MORE SUSTAINABLE CLEANSER

Once shunned by skincare pros as too abrasive, cleansing bars are having a resurgence. The latest formulas are gentle, nourishing, and hailed for their sustainability, typically lasting longer than bottled cleansers and creating far less packaging waste. "In the past, soaps had high pH levels and were made with alkaline and harsh detergents that stripped skin of its healthy oils, leaving it dry, itchy, and irritated," says Dendy Engelman, M.D., a board-certified dermatologist in New York City. "Today's bars have balanced pH and contain moisturizing oils and soothing extracts to cleanse without compromising the skin barrier." (If you have dry or sensitive skin, stick with bars labeled "soap-free.") For the face, Dr. Engelman recommends formulas with calming extracts like green tea, rose, and aloe vera plus hydrating oils such as argan oil and olive oil, which are high in antioxidants, vitamins, and fatty acids. For the body, "try bars made with rich butters like shea and cocoa butter, nourishing vitamin E, and aloe vera, an antibacterial hydrator," she says. To keep your bar germ-free, give it a guick rinse under hot water after each use to reveal a fresh layer, and rest it in a holder that allows air all around it rather than in the murky, puddled water of a soap dish. -Victoria Kirby

etaphil

EDITORS' CHOICES:

For face: Joanna Vargas Ritual Bar, \$22, joannavargas.com; For body: Kopari Beauty Super Suds Soap Bar with shea butter and coconut oil, \$10, ulta.com; Soap-free for face and body: Cetaphil Gentle Cleansing Bar, \$5, drugstores



PULSE

Break Up TV Time

There's nothing wrong with a nice Netflix marathon, but make sure you get up and move while watching. Spending four or more hours a day in front of the television was associated with a 35% higher risk of blood clots compared with less than two and a half hours, says a new meta-analysis in the *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology*. And this was true independent of other factors such as age, sex, BMI, and physical activity. Being immobile for long periods impairs circulation and can cause blood to pool, say researchers, and you may also be likelier to snack unhealthily while lounging, which can lead to other issues (like weight gain) that increase your risk of clots. Try setting a "stand up" timer that goes off every 30 minutes, or find some inspo from our get-moving ideas on page 48.

Prevention EDITORS' CHOICE 2022

Dip, Drip, Drizzle

Meet your new foodie obsessions: Shito sauce and pepper sauce from **Ayo Foods**, two traditional accompaniments in West African cuisines. Pepper sauce has a habanero kick with notes of tomato,

ginger, and basil, and it pairs well with meat, seafood, or Puff Puff (a classic fried dough ball also

available from Ayo). Shito sauce is smoky, spicy, and sweet with an umami vibe, and it's super versatile—try it on eggs or grilled fish, with rice and beans, or for dunking your grilled cheese or veggie sticks. (\$9, ayo-foods.com)



WORKOUT WOMEN: ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES HAMSTER WATCHING TV: DAN SAELINGER.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE



If you are feeling exhausted and in need of revitalization, you should consider a detox or cleanse. With Active Liver™ you have the tool to do this gently and on a daily basis.

Detox your body all year long

🔁 ach day, our liver is working hard to remove waste products and toxins from processed foods, unclean air, water and even our own body. But as we get exposed to increasingly more toxins, the liver struggles to remove them all and can start storing them in our body fat.

We quickly may notice the results in our energy levels, in our lack of youthful appearance - and surprisingly, on our waistlines.

UNJUNKING YOUR BODY

A detox, like a water or juice fast, is an excellent way to rid the body of stored toxins, but

The Liver & Your Waistline

it is often difficult to abide by, and involves days or even weeks of feeling tired and sick. However, there are other ways.

DETOX WITH ONE TABLET A DAY

Active LiverTM is a dietary supplement that helps promote a healthy liver and helps you detox on a daily basis - all year round. With just one tablet a day, it gently but effectively uses known herbal extracts to facilitate detoxing of the body-without the "side effects".



The liver is an important fat burning organ. If the liver is sluggish or clogged with waste material, it can start building up around the waistline, and even inside the internal organs (which may lead to a fatty liver). Making sure your liver is working well will help you flush fats from the body.



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VES NO



TEST YOURSELF:

	IEO	no
I suffer from headaches or brain fog	0	0
I have a hard time losing weight	0	0
I have indigestion & bloating	0	0
I'm tired all the time	0	0
My skin itches and I see brown spots	0	0
My tongue is coated	0	0

Does this sound like you? Then try Active Liver as a help to promote your liver health.

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Dietary Supplement

ZHANNA DANILOVA/GETTY IMAGES

Create Your Healthiest Home

Master what it takes to make every room of the house safe and clean.

THE KITCHEN

Freezing meat is a great way to reduce food waste and always have protein on hand, but it's important to defrost it safely to avoid foodborne illness. The ideal method is to thaw it in the fridge overnight. Use ground meat, poultry, and seafood within two days and red meat within five (you can safely refreeze thawed meat if you haven't removed it from the fridge!).

1/8 tsp dish soap; blot the mess with a clean cloth, then dab with 1 Tbsp white vinegar mixed with 1 cup water.

Lessen sofa odor by slipping dryer sheets into envelopes and tucking them under cushions.

Zap pet fur by spraying furniture with an antistatic spray. Then put on a clean pair of lightly dampened rubber gloves and run your hands over cushions.







stink and bacteria buildup.

To get rid of stains on carpet or upholstery: Mix 1 cup water and

DIY frozen veggies by blanching and then freezing; freeze fresh fruit on a

parchment-lined baking sheet and por-

tion into freezer bags. And try this tip

for stretching fresh produce: Pickle it!

Squeegee the shower after each

bathing session to prevent mildew.

Hang towels on a rack or an overthe-door towel bar instead of a hook;

this helps them dry faster, preventing

THE BATHROOM



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A Lifetime of Helping

Melissa Freeman, M.D., is a 96-year-old doctor still practicing in Harlem. Interviewer Allana Haynes talked to her about what she's learned throughout her incredible medical career. Here, a fascinating snippet:

How does the granddaughter of a formerly enslaved man become interested in medicine? I was really interested in biology and had taken several classes that led me to thinking about going into medicine. I eventually went into the field of internal medicine.

What are some early career memories?

During my internship at Kings County Hospital, I went to the pediatric ward, and a little fellow, about 5 years old, said, "What's your name?" I told him I was Dr. Freeman. He said, "You're a doctor? I never heard of a lady doctor." I also worked in a Manhattan hospital where two of the doctors were looking for physicians interested in working with patients who were addicted to narcotics. I had had expo-

sure to a hospital social worker who once walked someone into my office who was addicted to narcotics, asking if there was anything we could

do. At that time, our only option was to admit them to the inpatient divisionbut it was just to get them off drugs; then they let them go. I started working in the field of drug addiction, managing the use of medication to treat people, particularly young women.

What motivated you to keep going through such a long career, and do you ever think about retiring?

It's very challenging helping people—people of color, Black peopledefeat [conditions] that have taken us away from life-hypertension, diabe-



graduated from Howard University College of Medicine in 1955.

tes, kidney disease, joint pain. This was something that I wanted to do and have continued to do. I'm not of a young age, but I still have energy, and I'm still able to open the doors of my practice, so I have no plans of retiring. If people want me to help them, I am more than willing to try.

GET THE BOOK Lift Every Voice celebrates Black elders who helped shape

history. (\$36, amazon .com)





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25-Minute Meal Meal Under \$10 Chicken Piccata Pasta

SERVES 4

1 Cook 8 oz whole-grain spaghetti (we used Barilla) per pkg. directions. Reserve ½ cup cooking water, drain pasta, and return to pot, then toss with ½ cup flat-leaf parsley (chopped), 1 Tbsp finely grated lemon zest, and 2 Tbsp lemon juice.

\$1.49

2

Meanwhile, thinly slice 1 lb boneless. skinless chicken breasts crosswise into 1/4-in.-thick pieces and season with 1/4 tsp each kosher salt and pepper. Heat 1 Tbsp olive oil in large skillet on medium-high. Add half of chicken and cook until golden brown, 1 to 2 min. per side; transfer to bowl.

\$2.59

3

Reduce heat to medium, add 1 Tbsp oil and remaining chicken, and cook 1 min. Turn chicken. scatter 4 cloves garlic (finely chopped), 1 Tbsp capers (rinsed and chopped), and 1/2 tsp red pepper flakes over top, and cook 1 min. more. Return first batch of chicken to skillet and toss to combine.

68¢

4

Add ½ cup dry white wine and simmer 1 min. Remove from heat, sprinkle ½ cup parsley (chopped) over top, then toss with pasta (adding reserved cooking water if needed).

\$1.29

PER SERVING 427 cal, 36 g pro, 42 g carb, 5 g fiber, 2.5 g sugars (0 g added sugars), 12 g fat (1.5 g sat fat), 83 mg chol, 258 mg sodium

TOTAL: \$6.05

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FEEL-GOOD FLAVOR

Capers give this month's dish its distinct tang, but they're more than just a flavor lender—they contain important antioxidants and vitamins. Other condiments that will boost your meal:

DOUCHI

This Chinese staple, also known as fermented black beans, is actually made from black soybeans, and the fermentation creates gut-friendly bacteria that can improve digestion, says Laura lu, R.D., a certified intuitive eating counselor in New York City. Used as a sauce base, douchi are also rich in powerful antioxidants. You can order douchi or jarred black bean sauce from Amazon or umamicart.com.

ACHAR

"This is the Hindi name for a pickled food, commonly made from mango, lime, green chile, carrot, and turmeric," says Vandana Sheth, R.D.N., author of *My Indian Table: Quick & Tasty Vegetarian Recipes.* Achar delivers bold flavor, antioxidants, antiinflammatory ingredients, and probiotics. Some of Sheth's favorite brands include Mother's Recipe, Rani, and Patak's, all available from Amazon.

CALABRIAN CHILE PASTE

This condiment is made from hot Calabrian chile peppers, olive oil, salt, and vinegar. The capsaicin in chiles supports digestion and circulation, Sheth says, and the paste is tasty on meat, veggies, pizza, eggs, you name it. Browse supermarketitaly.com or try TuttoCalabria or Firelli hot sauce from Amazon.

DUKKAH

"Every culture has a condiment that dates back centuries; the history is as rich as the flavor and health benefits," lu says. This Egyptian spice mix is a perfect example: Each blend is different but features nuts, sesame seeds, and spices. Check out Skordo, Good & Gather, or the dukkah-inspired topping Ami Ami.

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How to **Increase Metabolism** at Any Age

Study suggests that a low-glycemic high-protein diet can increase the metabolism. If you want to optimize your body's metabolism for more effective weight loss — all while targeting stubborn belly fat and improving your health along the way — Almased may be just what you were looking for. Supported by over 30 years of scientific research, Almased:



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BEFORE

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BALANCE BOOSTER

PULSE

Work on your balance and arm strength with the single-leg bicep curl.

Stand up straight, with a dumbbell in each hand. Raise 1 leg off the floor, knee bent so your thigh and the bottom of your foot are parallel to the floor.

- 2 Slowly curl the weights up toward your shoulders; try to keep your elbows still and let your biceps do the work.
- 3 Hold for a second, then slowly lower the dumbbells to starting position.
- 4 That's 1 rep. Do at least 10 reps, then raise the other leg and repeat.



How to Choose the Perfect Walking Shoes

Constantly dealing with crammed toes or achy arches because you can't find sneakers that fit just right? These tips from Chanel Perkins, D.P.M., a double board-certified podiatrist at UTMB Health in Houston, can help you find your perfect size.

SIZE UP

Athletic sneakers will usually need to be a larger size than fashion shoes. "When your foot strikes the ground, it expands in length and width," says Perkins. "For most people, going up a half size is perfect, but pay attention to how your feet feel and size up accordingly."

DO THE FINGER TEST

"You should have about a half inch of room (roughly a finger's width) from the tip of your longest toe to the end of the shoe. Shoes should align with the shape of your foot (so if your foot is wide, look for shoes that are wider, especially in the toe box), and make sure your little toe isn't squished," Perkins says.

MEET THIS CHECKLIST

A solid walking shoe has a roomy toe box, firm arch support, and flexibility in the forefoot. Look for a lower heel height (a.k.a. less cushioning); this allows for a natural walking style to help prevent pain and injury.



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When Walking Is More Than Walking

These participants in our Virtual Walk last fall found meaning and joy out on the road—and you can too. There's still time to sign up for our spring event!



"I started walking for my blind dog, Missy.

I tried taking her on walks, but she couldn't get far—so I carried her. I could tell she really enjoyed the fresh air

and the time we spent together, and I did too. I purchased a dog stroller, and we used it so much we wore out the front tire twice! Missy knew the smell of where we stopped for coffee and the pup cup of whipped cream that typically followed. She passed away last fall. She was such a great dog; she put an incredible amount of faith and trust in our family. I'm still walking, but I miss my loyal companion who rescued me." —*Tracy Nappier, Lemont, IL*



"As my 19-year-old son prepared for Air Force basic training, he started running in the mornings. I decided to walk, knowing the fresh air and exercise

would be good for me too. He would lap me a few times but then walk with me when he finished. This was when something magical occurred: My teenager used sentences longer than three words and a grunt—we actually talked about life stuff and feelings! I am so proud of his service and thankful that we had this time together. I have continued walking, and I am grateful for this habit, which helped me really get to know the man my son is becoming." —Valerie Swirczek, Fallon, NV



JOIN OUR NEXT VIRTUAL WALK ON APRIL 30!

Learn more about our free 5K Virtual Walk and our "Why I Walk" contest (Tracy and Valerie were two of our winners last year!) at **prevention.com** /virtual-walk.

LOVE YOUR WALKS

In *Walk Your Way Calm*, discover 101 guided walks and a

walking log to track your steps and mood. \$25, <u>prevention.com</u> /walkcalmjournal



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Mother-Daughter Duo Taking Charge of Their Health and Aging

Television personality and author of *Why Did I Come Into This Room?* Joan Lunden, and her daughter Jamie Hess, a wellness mentor

(@NYCfitfam), believe in empowering discussions on women's health and aging. Here they tackle a common issue that impacts 1 in 3 women—bladder leakage.

Q: Why is it important to talk about bladder leakage?

(Joan) The embarrassment of leakage, which can happen to women at any age, can be isolating. In my book, I wanted to talk about aging in a way that's honest. relatable and shareable. I even have a chapter titled. "Sometimes I Laugh So Hard, Tears Run Down My Legs!" Many women may not think bladder leakage is common...and many are too scared to talk about it.



Q: What causes bladder leakage?

(Joan) Bladder leakage is usually caused by Stress Urinary Incontinence (SUI). It occurs when simple movements put pressure on the bladder. To strengthen the pelvic floor, women have been told for vears to do their Kegels. But the problem is...50% of women are unable to do a Kegel correctly! (Jamie) I struggled with leakage after childbirth and I can tell you that pads and leakproof undies don't get to the heart of the issue, and let's face it, they're embarrassing, too!

Q: How does INNOVO work?

(Jamie) INNOVO gave me a life-changing, non-invasive solution that delivers pelvic floor strengthening Kegels with the push of a button. I wear INNOVO smart shorts for 30 minutes a day. It's discreet, no prescription is needed, and it's easy to use at home.

What to Know About Stress Urinary Incontinence

Stress Urinary Incontinence (SUI) is a leakage of urine during activities that put abdominal pressure on your bladder, such as coughing or sneezing. Weakened pelvic floor muscles can contribute to SUI; weakness may occur from events such as pregnancy, childbirth, aging or pelvic surgery.

INNOVO is the right solution for SUI. INNOVO's Multipath[™] technology automatically engages your pelvic floor muscles, giving you 180 precise Kegels per session, and strengthens your pelvic floor from the inside out to stop leaking at the root.

INNOVO is an FDA-cleared, non-invasive technology that treats Stress Urinary Incontinence from home.



JAMIE HESS IS ONE OF THE 87% OF WOMEN WHO ARE NOW LEAK-FREE BECAUSE OF INNOVO.

"For me, leaking happened after the birth of my second child. I was running a half marathon, and I turned to my husband and said 'Babe, I'm literally peeing my pants and there is nothing I can do about it.' "Running was Jamie's passion and her joy. "My leaking issues took running away from me. I knew I had to do something about it, and I started using INNOVO, which changed my life."



INNOVO is easy, non-invasive, and no prescription is needed.

PREVENTION

WELLNESS

Natural Benefits of Carrots

Carrots are versatile veggies full of fiber, vitamins A and C, and carotenoids, which can help improve vision and are linked to a reduced risk of certain kinds of cancer. Carotenoids are best absorbed when carrots are chopped, blended, or cooked and eaten with dietary fat, says Kory DeAngelo, M.S., R.D.N., an assistant professor and nutrition clinic coordinator at Bastyr University and Bastyr Center for Natural Health in Seattle. Try a few of her favorite recipes here.

BY ARRICCA ELIN SANSONE

ANTIOXIDANT SMOOTHIE

Enjoy this carrot-ginger beverage for breakfast or an afternoon snack. In a blender, combine 1 chopped carrot, 1 cored and chopped tart **apple** (such as Granny Smith), 1 to 2 tsp fresh ginger, 2 to 4 Tbsp raw unsalted cashews, 1 cup carrot juice or water, and 2 tsp lime juice. Blend until smooth and creamy. (Hint: If you don't have a high-powered blender, use shredded carrots and soak the cashews in hot water for an hour to soften, then drain before adding to blender.) Makes 1 serving.

"CARROT CAKE" OVERNIGHT OATS

Indulge in a sweet treat for breakfast or dessert. In a small bowl, stir together ½ cup **old-fashioned rolled oats**, ¾ cup **milk** of choice, ¼ cup shredded **carrots**, 1 Tbsp **raisins**, ¼ tsp **cinnamon**, and a pinch each of **nutmeg** and **salt**. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Top with ½ cup chopped **walnuts** or **pecans** before serving. Makes 1 serving.

VITAMIN-RICH ROASTED VEGGIES WITH SPRING HERBS

Fresh herbs add extra zing to this side dish. Chop 3 carrots and 3 Yukon Gold potatoes into 1- to 1½-in. pieces. Toss with 1 Tbsp olive oil and salt and pepper to taste. Spread on baking sheet in a single layer, uncovered. Roast at 400°F for 30 to 40 min. or until done. In a separate bowl, combine 2 Tbsp finely chopped parsley, 2 Tbsp finely chopped dill, and 1 tsp lemon zest. Toss with carrots and potatoes. Serves 4.

How Plants Can Help Your Body & Mind

Horticultural therapy is a powerful healing tool.

BY HANNAH CHENOWETH

umans have long recognized that our connection to plants is inherently healing. In fact, research has shown that just having a plant in your hospital room could shorten your stay. Horticultural therapy takes this a step further by using plants and plant-based activities to support healing and rehabilitation. Here, Derrick Stowell, Ph.D., a registered horticultural therapist (HTR) and the education and horticultural therapy program administrator for the University of Tennessee Gardens, explains how it works.

First, what is horticultural therapy?

Horticulture is the act of growing and caring for plants. When you tag on the word "therapy," it means an HTR is facilitating a person's participation in horticultural activities to achieve specific goals within that person's treatment plan. Simply put, it's about using the connection of plants and people to improve health outcomes. It might involve gardening activities that take place outdoors or an HTR visiting a patient's room to help them tend to a container garden.

What physical rehab benefits does it offer?

Whether someone is recovering from a stroke, surgery, or injury, in some hospitals an HTR will work with the patient's treatment team to help advance their goals. This could mean strengthening muscles, relearning to walk, regaining dexterity in hands, or building endurance, coordination, and balance. Horticultural therapy also helps a patient carry out daily living



activities and navigate space. While a clinical setting is designed to prevent falls, being in a garden helps someone safely reacclimate to uneven surfaces.

What about cognitive and emotional benefits?

Depression and social isolation also happen in hospitals, so there's a ton of value in getting patients outdoors and interacting in a group setting. Horticultural therapy gets patients moving, motivated, and connected to the outside world and plans for the future. Research shows that it greatly improves people's moods and reduces depression. It can also increase memory, stimulate the mind, and provide a much-needed mental break. In stressful environments like hospitals, we lose our ability to focus, so being in a garden helps someone get in a better mental position to deal with more grueling and intense therapies.

Is the therapy particularly helpful for certain people?

While the focus has been on its benefits for rehabilitation and behavioral health as well as for older adults living with dementia, interacting with plants can really help everyone improve their emotional, mental, and physical well-being.

How can one reap the benefits outside of a hospital?

When horticultural therapy takes place in a community setting rather than a clinical one, we call it "therapeutic horticulture." The American Horticultural Therapy Association (of which I'm the president) has a list of regional and networking groups at ahta.org.

Your Clean Beauty Glossary

Our expert-vetted guide demystifies these terms so you can find safe, effective products.

BY VICTORIA KIRBY

he good news: There's more awareness than there used to be about how the products we use affect our health and the planet. But now that so many brands peg themselves as "clean," "natural," or "organic," these terms have gotten muddled, making it harder to know when these claims are legit.

"The term 'organic' is regulated, but 'natural' and 'clean' are not legally defined, so there are almost no set standards for beauty brands to abide by," says Annie Jackson, cofounder and COO of Credo Beauty, a cleanbeauty retailer known for strict product vetting. While companies have become more transparent about their formulas and many retailers like Target, CVS, and Sephora have strong vetting criteria for products they carry in their clean-beauty sections, deceptive labeling is still an industry-wide problem, "and the average person can't tell whether a product is authentically 'clean' or 'natural' just by reading the ingredients list," says Jackson. Here's how to navigate the lingo.

CLEAN

Brands use "clean" to indicate products that are considered safe for people and the planet. "Clean beauty is a safety standard, not an indicator of how natural a formula is," explains Jackson, so it can include both natural and synthetic (i.e., labmade) ingredients.

Here's where it gets tricky: Because there's no regulation around clean beauty, brands and retailers have taken it upon themselves to classify ingredients as "clean" or not based on their own criteria and



ADOBESTOCK.

research, which means lists vary from brand to brand. There are a handful of ingredients that nearly every company agrees are bad, such as parabens and talc, but some experts argue that calling certain ingredients "toxic" is misleading if they pose a risk only in very high doses and not at the low levels you'd find in ordinary products (similar to how alcohol could be fatal were you to drink an entire bottle of vodka, but not when you have just one vodka soda).

"The best way to shop 'clean' is to look for a clearly written ingredients standard



on an established beauty brand's or retailer's website and see if their definition of safe, healthy formulas aligns with yours," says Jackson. "It means they've done the vetting so you don't have to."

EDITORS' CHOICES: Macrene Actives High Performance Face Serum, \$195, macreneactives.com; **Weleda**

Skin Food Original Ultra-Rich Cream, \$19, weleda.com

NATURAL

"True 'natural' beauty products are made entirely of ingredients sourced directly from nature," says Jackson. "They contain no synthetics or chemically altered ingredients, only pure substances such as essential oils and clays." However, the term "natural" is not regulated. A bill currently on the table in Congress, the Natural Cosmetics Act, would create regulations, though critics say they're not comprehensive enough to enforce real change. For now, the word "natural" on packaging doesn't guarantee that all or even most of the formula is in fact natural. And unless there's a vegan claim, natural products can include animal ingredients. Even the term "100% natural" is somewhat misleading on products containing more than one ingredient, says Jackson. "A bottle of pure marula oil is 100% natural—but combining a bunch of natural ingredients creates a formula not found in nature."

Terms like "naturally derived" and "plant-sourced" "mean the ingredient started as natural but may possibly have been chemically processed and may now be synthetic," says Macrene Alexiades, M.D., Ph.D., a board-certified dermatologist and clean-skincare formulator based in New York City. This isn't necessarily bad, as experts emphasize that "all-natural" doesn't equal safe. "There are toxic ingredients and carcinogens derived from nature," Dr. Alexiades points out. On the flip side, "some synthetic ingredients may be superior to natural ones that can contain contaminants," she says. Chemical processing can remove allergens and irritants from a natural substance, making it safer to use on people, and synthetic versions of ingredients previously sourced from environmentally disruptive harvesting could be kinder to the planet.

Pros recommend shopping for natural products from an established brand that shares a clear definition of what it considers natural, as that's easier than trying to decipher ingredient lists. "A lot of plants have long, unrecognizable Latin or scientific names, making it hard to know how many natural ingredients are in a formula," says Dr. Alexiades. **EDITORS' CHOICES:** Pai Rosehip BioRegenerate Universal Facial Oil, \$44, credobeauty.com; **Cocokind** Organic Ultra **Chlorophyll Mask, \$20, cocokind.com**



ORGANIC

"Organic" refers to non-GMO ingredients grown without the use of chemicals (such as synthetic pesticides and fertilizers) and not sourced from animals who are given hormones or antibiotics. "While 'natural' means any substance from nature, 'organic' is about the conditions under which a natural substance is grown or an animal is raised," explains Dr. Alexiades. The FDA does not regulate the use of the term "organic" on beauty products, but if they contain agricultural ingredients, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) does. It stipulates that a product must contain at least 70% organic ingredients to be labeled "made with organic ingredients." Products with the USDA certified organic seal are certified by an accredited

agent to contain at least 95% organically produced ingredients, and there's a strict list of which nonorganic ingredients are allowed to be in the other 5% of the formula.

"Formulas with fewer than 70% organic ingredients can't say 'organic' on the label but can call out which ingredients are organic on the ingredients list," says Jackson. While these labeling regulations make it easier to shop for organic beauty products, Dr. Alexiades notes that small, independent brands often don't have the resources to provide the lengthy documentation required to get USDA organic labeling, particularly for formulas with lots of organic ingredients, as every ingredient requires its own documentation. This means the range of USDA certified organic beauty products is somewhat limited and the formulas tend to be more basic, explains Dr. Alexiades.

EDITORS' CHOICES: Juice Beauty Organic Facial Wash, \$24, juicebeauty .com; **Le Prunier** Plum Beauty Oil, \$72, credobeauty.com



SEX & LOVE Tough Conversations Worth Having

Connect on these issues to avoid hurt feelings.

BY RACHEL ZAR, L.M.F.T., C.S.T.

ne of the most common areas of relationship distress comes in the aftermath of a betrayal. Often this breach is much more nuanced than "They slept with someone else." Instead, it can look like "They're flirting with a coworker," "They spent the money we were saving for a house," or "They told their family about our last fight."

Truth is, in many cases most emotional land mines could be avoided with a few candid conversations early in the relationship. To help, here are some questions to discuss with your partner:

"How do we define monogamy?"

Basically, monogamy refers to being in a relationship with and having sex with—only one person. It's an agreement with a partner that sets boundaries around what is sacred to your relationship. We often assume that we all have the same ideas about what it entails, but these assumptions may leave your relationship vulnerable to accidental betravals. For example, let's say one partner assumes that monogamy means one should never flirt with others, but the other thinks flirting is fair game. Or one partner enjoys watching pornography, but the other considers it a breach of their agreement.

I recommend discussing what monogamy means to you. What constitutes physical or emotional infidelity? This may not be an easy conversation, especially if there are differences in your understanding that need to be ironed out. But these talks always go better if they



Rachel Zar, L.M.F.T., C.S.T., is a relationship and sex therapist at Spark Chicago Therapy and the Northwestern Medicine Center for Sexual Medicine & Menopause.



happen before, rather than after, an assumed line is crossed.

"Who gets to know the details of our relationship?"

In an intimate relationship, there is often an assumed privacy between partners, especially around vulnerable issues. It's also completely normal to talk to friends and family about someone you love—or turn to others for support when your relationship gets hard. So where do you draw the line?

Ask each other and answer: Whom do you turn to when struggling with our relationship? Who are your trusted confidants? Are we comfortable sharing details of our sex life? Whom can we vent to after a fight? What's just between us? By being intentional and coming to an understanding, you'll avoid future hurt.

"What are our sexual and financial expectations?"

Two of the most avoided conversation topics in new relationships are sex and money—and they're also among the leading focal points of conflict and betrayals of trust. So talk about them early and often.

Get curious about how important sex feels to each of you. How often would you each like to be sexual? What are the best times? How does stress impact your libido? And on the topic of finances: How transparent would you like to be? What are your financial stressors? What do each of you feel comfortable spending on?

It's the very rare couple who are perfectly aligned on every issue. But getting out ahead of potential problems will set you up for success.

Unhelpful Everyone
Habits Should Quit

Plucking damaging patterns from your life can boost your happiness so you'll really feel like a lucky duck.

BY ZEE KRSTIC

OLD HABIT

COMPARING YOURSELF WITH PEOPLE AROUND YOU

INSTEAD

Think about what makes you special.

Lots of us have a friend who posts perfect craft projects ("Nailed it!") or know a fellow parent who never misses a kid's game, but dwelling on where you fall short isn't helpful. "By learning to focus on ourselves instead of others, we can decrease our stress and anxiety, increase our happiness and self-esteem, and live a more purposeful and authentic life," says Renee Exelbert, Ph.D., a licensed psychologist and an adjunct professor at New



York University. She suggests celebrating strengths and victories (even tiny ones!) and doing things that bring you happiness without external validation.

OLD HABIT

SHOULDERING RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVERYTHING

INSTEAD

Delegate—even if it doesn't seem worth it.

Whether you're handling a big project at work or planning a family reunion, it's easy to fall into the trap of doing most of the work to be sure the end result is perfect. "We go through life as if we're

> responsible for every outcome we experience," says Amy Johnson, Ph.D., author of *The Little Book of Big Change*. "We fail to recognize just how much happens effortlessly." Letting other people pick up the slack will lower your stress, and you may be pleasantly surprised with the outcome.

OLD HABIT

TRACKING WHO DISAPPOINTS YOU

INSTEAD

Notice who comes through.

It's hard to forget friends who didn't visit when you were laid up or failed to attend an event you hosted. "This 'injustice collecting' causes us to see the glass as half empty versus half full," Exelbert says. "Embrace gratitude for those who do show up. It increases our happiness, improves social relationships and self-esteem, and increases our longevity." Try starting a gratitude journal: Every day, write a few sentences about something you're thankful for. In addition to loved ones, maybe you're grateful for a robust subway system that shuttles you to work or a barista who knows what your "usual" is and gives it to you with a smile.

OLD HABIT

CONSTANTLY CHECKING YOUR PHONE

INSTEAD

Take intentional breaks.

Leave your phone out of the picture when you're with friends and family, even if you're just digging into takeout food on the couch. "We simply can't focus after so much online time; this practice shortens our attention span," says Lori Whatley, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist and the author of Connected & Engaged. Plus, she adds, "too much social media use has been connected to depression and anxiety." One thing that will help: practicing mindfulness. If you're new to the idea, try a meditation and mindfulness app like Headspace. Staying in the present moment should boost your emotional well-being, and it will likely make your companions happier as well.



OLD HABIT

SHOPPING FOR HAPPINESS

INSTEAD

Revel in nonmaterial joys and experiences.

"So much of our energy is spent chasing [physical] things we think will make us happy," says Johnson. "The next vacation, losing a few pounds—they never lead to lasting happiness." She says humans evolved to "recalibrate" quickly after events, so the happiness boost triggered by things outside of ourselves fades fast. Teaching a niece how to read, having adventures with friends—intangibles like these give us real warm fuzzies.



OVERTHINKING

INSTEAD

Focus on what you can control.

Thousands of years ago, the practice of turning stuff over in our minds kept us from repeating dangerous mistakes, says psychiatrist Mimi Winsberg, M.D. These days, overthinking can lead us to agonize over mundane things like the wording of an email or events beyond our control. To prevent spiraling, decide whether you're obsessing about something you can actually change. If so, allot a certain amount of time to taking action, then distract yourself with an activity like a movie or exercise.

OLD HABIT

HOLDING ON TO A GRIEVANCE

INSTEAD

Loosen your grip and let it go.

Even if you know that your coworker purposely leaves you off happy hour

invites or that a neighbor spoke ill of you, revisiting these complaints hurts only you. "Holding on to anger and repressing angry feelings may increase blood pressure and the risk of coronary heart disease," Exelbert says. "Forgiveness can lead to healthier relationships and improved mental health." Consider where the other person was coming from

(maybe your coworker feels insecure about their work performance or your neighbor has been stressed by caregiving duties). Even if you can't forgive them, you can decide it's their problem, not yours, and commit to a fresh start.

START A MINDFUL NEW HABIT

The 14-Day Meditation Challenge Decommended by a well-based by

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PREVENTION

HEALTH

Meet Your Hands

Get a grip on how your hands work—and how to keep them healthy so they can write, play, text, and touch for life.

BY LISA MULCAHY ARTWORK BY ELSA MORA

1 Cool Connections /

About a quarter of the bones in your body are in your hands-that's 27 apiece-connected by ligaments, tendons, and joints, which allow you to flex and grasp. You also have over 30 muscles in each hand, some starting at your elbow and running along your forearm to your fingers. These muscles fit into the bones of your digits to make them move like puppets on a string. There are also



Hands hurt when you twist open that jar of tomato sauce? You might be dealing with arthritis, an inflammation of the joints that can cause pain and swelling and that strikes women more often than men. Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common type, and repetitive gripping or pinching can contribute to its development. "OA most often affects the tips of your fingers and the base of your thumb," says Jamie Nguyen, an occupational therapist who specializes in hands and upper extremity rehab at the NYU Langone Orthopedic Center in New York City. Consult a hand surgeon or an orthopedist for pain-relieving options. "An over-the-counter brace or a custom orthosis created by a therapist can be extremely helpful in alleviating pain symptoms, especially if the OA affects the base of your thumb," says Nguyen.

3 Soothe and Protect /

Constant texting can hurt your hands: Take breaks from your smartphone, use a PopSocket (a plastic circle that attaches to the back of your phone for a more comfy hold), and stretch your wrists and forearms while gently moving your thumbs. Also, don't forget that your hands are almost always exposed to the sun while you're out, so put sunscreen on the tops of them as well as on your fingers (tip: After applying it elsewhere, rub any extra onto your hands rather than wiping it off). Use a waterresistant sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher and broad-spectrum protection daily, and wear fingerless gloves during gel nail treatments-UV light can also damage skin.

tiny muscles in the hand and fingers that let you spread, bend, extend, and stretch your digits. Your hands use two kinds of grip: power grip (in which your palm, long flexor tendons, fingers, and thumb work in tandem to carry, say, a heavy grocery bag) and precision grip (picture your thumb and index finger acting like tweezers, as when holding a pen).

MY DIAGNOSIS Why Did I Look Pregnant Every Time I Ate?

This mom knew the pain and bloating weren't just in her head. Now she's helping others eat—and feel—better.

BY KRYSTYNA HOUSER, AS TOLD TO MARISA COHEN



n 2013, soon after I had my third baby, I started to experience strange things with my body. When I would eat, I would get this terrible pain that moved from one side of my abdomen to the other. I developed unexplained rashes and brain fog too. But the worst thing was the extreme bloating. I had never experienced anything like it before! I would start eating a meal looking like my normal self, and then by the end I would have to unbutton my pants, because it looked as if I was eight months pregnant.

Over the next two years, I saw several doctors in New York, and they couldn't find anything wrong with me. They assumed I had postpartum depression and suggested I see a therapist. I started to think that maybe they were right and it was all in my head. But something inside me knew that wasn't it. A friend recommended that I see Frank Lipman, M.D., who practices a mix of Eastern and Western



Houser's cookbook was inspired by her health journey.

> that I had SIBO by doing a second breath test, the doctors recommended a course of antibiotics. Now I know that

medicine. He listened to me describe my symptoms, looked at my eyes and tongue, and within minutes said, "I'd bet anything you have SIBO." It was astonishing—I had been looking for an answer for two years, and he figured it out in five minutes.

THE CLUE IN MY BREATH

I soon learned that SIBO stands for "small intestinal bacterial overgrowth"; it's a condition that can cause all the symptoms I was experiencing. I went back to my GP and told him about it, and he gave me a breath test to do at home. I had to eat a very neutral diet for 24 hours, then breathe into a tube every 15 minutes for about an hour and mail the tubes to a lab to see if there was excess hydrogen or methane in my breath created by bacteria in my gut. Dr. Lipman's instinct was right-the tests came back positive for SIBO. My GP told me that the best doctors treating this condition were Mark Pimentel, M.D., and Ali Rezaie, M.D., at Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles, and by chance I was doing some work in L.A., so I went to see them. After confirming

antibiotics are a standard treatment for SIBO, but my doctors told me that antibiotics could *cause* SIBO, and we believe that's how I got it: When I had my third C-section, I developed a dangerous MRSA infection in the hospital and had to take very strong antibiotics. They saved my life, but also probably caused the SIBO. So I asked if there was any other treatment I could opt for. I have three kids and I work, and I didn't want to be messing around with this for years, so I said, "What can I do that will just knock this out?"

SHAKES, DIETS, AND A COOKBOOK

My doctors put me on an elemental liquid diet, which meant that I consumed nothing but horrible-tasting shakes for 28 days. It was one of the hardest things I've ever done in my life, but by the time I was done, I'd say 90% of the symptoms were gone. After that, for two years I followed a low-fermentation diet, which limits fiber, dairy, and fruit and allows proteins and easy-to-digest carbs such as rice and potatoes. I had a few more flare-ups and had to do the elemental diet two more times, but now I am completely SIBO-free.

The low-fermentation diet was so helpful for me, but it was really hard to create meals that would work with the diet and that the rest of my family would enjoy. So I joined up with a nutritionist, Robin Berlin, R.D.N.; we tweaked the lowfermentation recipes and combined them with family favorites, and we just published the result, *The Good LFE Cookbook: Low Fermentation* *Eating for SIBO, Gut Health, and Microbiome Balance.* I hope it can help other people who are struggling with SIBO feel better while eating food they love.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR DIAGNOSIS

Did you have symptoms that took a while to get properly diagnosed? We'd love to hear your story. Write to letters@prevention.com.

-) Could You Have SIBO?

SIBO, or small intestinal bacterial overgrowth, occurs when the small intestine. which is usually relatively sterile, gets overrun with bacteria that would normally be swept out. "When you eat, some of the food gets digested by the excess bacteria in your small bowel rather than by you, and that creates gas," explains Ali Rezaie, M.D., medical director of the GI Motility program at Cedars-Sinai, in Los Angeles. The bacteria

can also gobble up some of the nutrients your body needs, which can eventually lead to malnutrition. SIBO is most commonly triggered by food poisoning, Dr. Rezaie explains. It can also be caused by abdominal surgery, prolonged use of antibiotics or proton pump inhibitors, conditions such as celiac disease, or structural problems in the small intestine. Nonabsorbable antibiotics are a

common treatment for SIBO, though many patients will need maintenance therapy with pro-motility drugs or low-fermentation eating. "Most people who are properly treated for SIBO can have a very comfortable life, and many can be completely cured," Dr. Rezaie says.

THE MAIN SYMPTOMS OF SIBO INCLUDE:

- Bloating
- Abdominal distension
- Diarrhea
- ▶ Gas
- Abdominal pain
- Weight loss



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Achy Breaky Neck?

Tips on taming the ouch

BY STEPHANIE ANDERSON WITMER

70% of adults will experience neck pain that interferes with their daily lives.

aking up with a crick can be a real pain in the neck. You may feel soreness in your upper back area or neck when you're still, or a twinge when you're moving. Sleeping in a weird position is a well-known trigger, but an increasingly common cause is something we've all been doing a lot more of lately-staring at digital screens. "'Tech neck' is a muscle strain in the neck and upper back from holding our heads in a forward or downward position as we work long hours on computers or scroll on our phones," says Karen Erickson, D.C., F.A.C.C., a chiropractor in New York City. The issue usually goes away in about a week (call your doctor if it lasts longer or gets worse), and there's more good news: You can take actions to feel better-or help prevent pain in the first place.

<u>PREVENT IT</u>

HACK YOUR SLEEP

It's natural to move during the night; decrease your chances of a neck issue by sleeping on your side or back instead of on your stomach to prevent your neck from hyper-rotating, says Erickson. And here's how to pick a pillow: Any material is fine, but to find your perfect height, be sure your neck isn't at a steep angle or sunken in when you're flat on your back.

ADJUST YOUR WORK STATION

Wherever you're working, abide by the 90-90 rule for optimal computer posture. "Your elbows and knees should be at 90 degrees, with your feet flat on the ground," says Daniel Park, M.D., F.A.A.O.S., an orthopedic spine surgeon at Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak in Michigan. If you work on a laptop and have a separate keyboard, place it at elbow height and prop your laptop up so the screen is at eye level. "With a laptop, both the keyboard and the screen are low, which isn't good for posture," Erickson adds.



WET YOUR WHISTLE

Adequate hydration is the key to a lot, including a pain-free neck. "Muscles spasm more easily when you're dehydrated, but drinking enough fluids helps them relax," says Erickson. Need help remembering to sip? Set phone alerts or download a fun water-tracking app like Waterllama; it sends you reminders, calculates your personal H₂O needs, gives you wellness challenges, and more.

<u>treat it</u>

TRY HEAT OR COLD

For the first couple of days, ice the spot for 10 to 20 minutes about every hour, says Dr. Park; wrap the pack in a towel to protect skin. If it hurts longer than a few days, apply heat on the same schedule.

MOVE MORE

You may want to hold your neck as still as possible, but light movement is good for it. "If you don't use the muscle at all, it can stiffen up, causing more spasms," says Dr. Park. An easy 15-minute walk will do the trick; look straight ahead and focus on your walking form (arms lightly swinging) instead of gazing at your phone or your feet.

HIT THE DRUGSTORE

For most neck pain, an over-the-counter pain reliever such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or naproxen can ease the pinch. If OTCs don't provide relief or the crick lasts for more than two weeks, call your doctor, who can determine whether something more serious, like an injury or a nerve issue, is causing your pain.

3-DAY BOOST Make a Move

If you have 10 minutes, you can seriously help your heart.

BY ARIELLE WEG

ou've taken the stairs and parked your car farther from your destination-so what's next? "Any movement is always good for the body, to support cardiovascular health and lower your risk for chronic disease," says Natasha Trentacosta, M.D., a sports medicine specialist and an orthopedic surgeon at Cedars-Sinai Kerlan-Jobe Institute. She suggests incorporating movements that increase your heart rate as well as strength-training exercises to build lean muscle mass. And you can break it up and do 10 minutes at a time, she says.

A study recently published in the journal *JAMA Internal Medicine* found that if all Americans ages 40 and older added just 10 minutes of physical activity to each day, over 100,000 deaths could be prevented every year. With 20 or 30 minutes of added daily physical activity, that number drastically increases. And while the CDC says adults should aim for about 150 minutes of physical activity per week, that can mean many types of exercise. Here, some new ways to get that movement in.

TODAY LIFT WEIGHT WHILE YOU WAIT

Every time you find yourself waiting for something, take it as an opportunity to move, suggests Dean Seda, a NASM certified personal trainer. "Break the day down into smaller chunks of minutes when you can squeeze some movement in," he says. For instance, you could do squats while waiting for a Zoom meeting (camera off 'til it starts!) or do bicep curls during a commercial break. These kinds of foundational movements help burn calories and build up muscles we use every day. Fitness expert Jennifer Cohen agrees, adding that she'll place a resistance band around her



ankles and do lateral steps while her eggs cook or her coffee brews.

TOMORROW

Got a yoga mat rolled up in the corner waiting until you're "ready" to work out? It's not doing you any good over there! Roll it out in a spot where you'll be regularly so you'll see it every morning as a reminder to get in some activity. And yes, leave it there: "When it's visible to you, it's much harder to ignore," Cohen says. As soon as you wake up and see your mat, she suggests taking five minutes to stretch or do ab exercises. Need a little inspiration? Many virtual fitness programs, like Obé Fitness, recognize the need for speed and offer on-demand workouts, stretching, and more in just five minutes.

THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW FIND YOUR END GOAL

Walking around the neighborhood again may not seem like an exciting prospect, but it's easier when you have a goal in mind. Cohen suggests having a specific destination, like a coffee shop or a friend's house, or even deciding on a landmark you want to reach. "Aimlessly walking can become monotonous, but having a destination helps you kill two birds with one stone," she says. Seda adds that you can get the family involved: Next time you need to run an errand, instead of driving solo, grab a family member to walk or bike to the store with you. If a physical destination doesn't work for you, Dr. Trentacosta suggests choosing a fitness goal to aim toward, like walking a certain distance each day or training for a 5K.

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N V A S I O N

For many people, compounds in the air and in everyday objects can wage **an assault on the body**. Here's what we know about chemical intolerance, a.k.a. multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS). **BY MERYL DAVIDS LANDAU**

A Decadeadorea Eago,

Corinne Segura, of Victoria, Canada, was an active 29-year-old who enjoyed salsa dancing and liked to cycle. But after exposure to mold in her rental home, she began having strange symptoms: Whenever Corinne was around certain very common chemicals—air fresheners, household pesticides, new carpet in a doctor's office, gas station pumps, even essential oil diffusers she became dizzy, disoriented, and exhausted, and her throat would swell. The symptoms became so debilitating, she eventually had to quit her job as a grant writer and move.

Doctors prescribed antihistamines and an asthma inhaler, but the only thing that helped was avoidance. "The more I removed chemicals from my space, the simpler it was to tell which products bothered me," Corinne says. After several years of this and taking supplements prescribed by a naturopath, Corinne has greatly improved. But her recovery hasn't been a straight line: When smoke from the California fires of 2020 wafted her way, her sensitivities revved back up. Recently, she says, she was stuck in fumy traffic and had to spend a day recovering in bed.

Although Corinne has never been diagnosed, it appears that she suffers from a condition known as multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS). Others

call it chemical intolerance, idiopathic environmental intolerance (IEI), or, when there is an identifiable initiating exposure, toxicant-induced loss of tolerance (TILT). And the condition is more common than many of us realize. A 2018 survey in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine found that 26% of Americans said they got symptoms after exposure to our environment's many odorous chemicals. Common complaints include migraines, skin rashes, brain fog, nausea, and even fainting or seizures, according to a survey published in Air Quality, Atmosphere & Health. And the problem seems to be growing, or at least it is better recognized than it once was: Rates of diagnosed chemical intolerance are up 300% from a decade ago.

MCS is thought to begin when someone encounters an irritating chemical either in one gulping dose (such as during the World Trade Center collapse) or from smaller but more lasting encounters, like the mold in Corinne's house. Once this happens, certain people can become sensitive to many fragrances. Scientists don't fully understand MCS, and not all physicians even accept that it exists. But a growing number are aiming to better grasp how contact with chemicals at levels considered safe can bother or debilitate so many, says allergist Jonathan Bernstein, M.D., a professor of medicine at the University of Cincinnati and editor in chief of Journal of Asthma, who sees many patients with the condition.

In some ways, chemical intolerance is similar to an allergy. When someone becomes allergic to, say, peanuts, contact with even a tiny amount creates a disproportionate reaction across the body. But MCS is not an allergy, because it doesn't cause the body to produce antibodies known as immunoglobulin E (IgE) as in an allergic reaction. For this reason, allergists often turn away people who complain of these symptoms because they don't know how to help them, Dr. Bernstein says.

SMELLS LIKE TROUBLE

Sensitivities can be initially caused or later triggered by a range of common factors, including:

FRAGRANCED PRODUCTS

This is one of the most common triggers, according to research by Anne Steinemann, Ph.D., a professor of civil engineering at the University of Melbourne in Australia. A single scented household or personal care product typically gets its smell from dozens of ingredients, most of which need not be listed on the label, any of which might set off a reaction.

OFFICE AND Home materials

These may also be brimming with airborne chemicalsnew furniture and flooring are two examples. That "new car smell" is actually formaldehyde and a soup of other volatile substances, says Gediminas Mainelis, Ph.D., a professor of environmental sciences at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ. New or renovated buildings create some of the biggest problems. Ironically, when the Environmental Protection Agency redid its headquarters in the late 1980s, several employees developed the condition, says Claudia Miller, M.D., professor emeritus in the **Department of Family and Community** Medicine at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. Even "green buildings" are not exempt, because the tight seals created around doors and windows to improve energy efficiency may trap gases and particles inside and worsen indoor air if ventilation is inadequate, Mainelis says.

CIGARETTE SMOKE

Burning cigarettes emit a wide range of chemicals, including benzene and lead, according to the American Lung Association. "We have measured 10 times higher particle mass concentrations inside smokers' homes compared with nonsmokers," Mainelis says. E-cigarette users are exposed to not only nicotine, but also ultrafine particles, volatile organic compounds, and other chemicals.

PESTICIDES AND INSECTICIDES

Even a single application of indoor pesticides has been known to initiate chemical intolerance, Dr. Miller says, and sufferers can be triggered when in houses or hotels where these are sprayed.

Often people can't put their finger on exactly which chemicals make them sick, Dr. Miller says, and some that don't even have smells can be triggers. (Test yourself at tiltresearch .org.) What's more, symptoms such as headaches may be chalked up to stress when they're actually due to a chemical trigger. The quantity of chemicals we're all exposed to has increased exponentially over the years, Dr. Bernstein says. "Some people are bothered by this more than others," he adds.

SOLVING THE MYSTERY

"Not having the scientific knowledge of what's going on [in the body of someone with MCS] is what causes some doctors to tell patients that it's not a real problem, that it's all in their head," says MCS researcher Thomas Uhde, M.D., chair of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. But there are theories, including these:

A UNIQUE IMMUNE REACTION

Unlike the IgE arm of our immune system that is associated with allergies, immune cells known as mast cells are created in the bone marrow before spreading through the body to repel invaders. Dr. Miller believes mast cells that are erroneously called up even when chemicals aren't dangerous cause the wide-ranging reactions.

THE NOCEBO EFFECT

Some posit that people become intolerant to chemicals when symptoms are linked in the brain with certain odors (the opposite of the placebo effect). Then, when the person later experiences those odors, their body sets off a reaction. "Nocebo symptoms are real; it's people's attributions of the symptoms to environmental factors that is wrong," suggests Omer Van den Bergh, Ph.D., a psychology professor in Belgium, who published this theory in the journal *Clinical Psychological Science*.

SENSORY PROCESSING GLITCHES

"If you have a traumatic experience that involves an odorant in the environment, an association is going to be laid down," which is helpful from an evolutionary perspective to keep us from danger, says Bernadette Cortese, Ph.D., an assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences who works with Dr. Uhde at MUSC. The pair hypothesize that, especially in people with certain kinds of anxiety, a traumatic or chronic stress involving a smell might then increase sensitivity to other odors that are strong, acidic, or burning (the kinds most likely to be hazardous). In a study they published in 2018, people with anxious personalities were more bothered by a smoky smell (one of these so-called "trigeminal odors") than other people were. Meanwhile, a roselike scent didn't faze them.

BREATHING EASIER

Treatments currently being tested follow from these theories. Dr. Uhde and Cortese found in a small, exploratory study that a brief stint of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) reduced overall sensitivity to smells in those with high anxiety. Dr. Miller advocates medicines that target mast cells, such as the prescription drug Gastrocrom and the over-the-counter spray NasalCrom. Blocking histamine receptors with allergy or GI drugs can sometimes also help, she says. And Van den Bergh created a treatment in which patients are coached on how to disrupt nocebo reactions.

But until a treatment is proven to work in large clinical trials, people with MCS are left to figure it out for themselves. The majority aim to eliminate chemicals from their lives, something that is very hard because chemicals are everywhere. Still, the effort is worth it: One study found that when air fresheners were taken out of office bathrooms, chemical concentrations in the air dropped by up to 96% within two weeks.

Still, living with MCS can be extremely disruptive. Janis Bell. an author near Tucson, was stricken decades ago while working in a newly constructed building. To get away from chemicals, she moved to Italy for several years because homes there tend to have fewer issues, she says. Once she returned to the U.S., Janis, now 71, experienced so much respiratory congestion and insomnia that she currently sleeps in a tent in her backyard or, in winter, in her car. Aside from avoiding chemicals, Janis has found that regular yoga and meditation help her find acceptance and reduce stress.

Corinne, for her part, grew into such an expert on

minimizing chemicals in her home that she became a consultant, educating others with MCS and other respiratory illnesses about the ideal materials to use in their spaces. (Hint: Vinyl and laminate flooring are not among them.) "Most people who are sensitive lead strict lives in order to survive and function. But that can't be the answer. We need to find ways to treat them by

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HOW TO REDUCE SCENTS

These steps help folks with MCS as well as allergies and other ills. Reduce air fresheners in your home, car, and office. Even items with pretty fruits or flowers on their labels get their scents from chemicals. Essential oil diffusers bother many people too. Choose the right filter. Carbon- and zeolite-based filters quell odors and chemical irritants, Dr. Bernstein says. Opening windows if outdoor conditions are favorable may also help. • Keep laundry fragrance-free. Because they leave your home through dryer vents, chemicals in laundry products become "secondhand scent" to others. • Limit perfume use. So many are sensitive that the American Lung Association officially recommends that everyone shun perfume, cologne, aftershave, and scented lotions and hairsprays at the office.

> better understanding the biological basis and studying which interventions are helpful," Cortese says.

Until then, Steinemann believes that all of us can help by reducing the mix of scented products that surround us. "People with chemical sensitivities are like human canaries," she has said. "They react earlier and more severely to chemical pollutants, even at low levels."



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MENU

5 Myths About Vegetarian Diets

Beefing up your knowledge may have a high-"steaks" impact on your health.

BY KATE ROCKWOOD ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANDREA DE SANTIS

MYTH #1 Vegetarian diets are always healthy.

MYTHBUSTER Plenty of studies show that a diet high in meat—especially red meat—can up your risk for heart disease and cancers like colorectal cancer. There's also solid evidence that fruits and veggies are good for you, and vegetarian diets have many health benefits. But cutting out meat doesn't *automatically* make your diet healthy. In fact, a study from the American College of Cardiology found that vegetarians with diets high in sweets, refined grains, and juice showed no heart-health benefits compared with meat eaters. "Many foods that qualify as vegetarian aren't nutrient-rich," says Lainey Younkin, R.D., owner of Lainey Younkin Nutrition. Sugary processed foods may be vegetarian but lack fiber, protein, and healthy fats, she adds. Veg or no, aim to eat whole foods, including fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, good sources of calcium, and whole grains, and go easy on sodium, fat, and sugar, says Nyssa Entrekin, R.D., associate director of Healthy Food Access at The Food Trust.

MYTH #2 Veggie burgers are a much healthier choice than meat burgers.

MYTHBUSTER It all comes down to the quality of the veggie burger. Many veggie burgers are highly processed and high in sodium, which can put you at risk for high blood pressure, heart attack, and stroke. Storebought versions can contain a big chunk of your recommended daily total amount of salt. The solution: Choose veggie burgers that are "minimally processed and made of vegetables, a whole grain, and beans," Entrekin says, and look for ones low in sodium and high in protein. Even better, you can make your own, she says. That way you not only control the salt, but also take in highprotein, high-fiber nutritious whole foods like beans, soy, tofu, and quinoa.

SCIENCE

MYTH #3

It's tough to get enough protein and iron without meat.

MYTHBUSTER Not so. A 2019 review of multiple studies found that vegans and vegetarians who ate a quality plant-based diet got more than enough protein. Many vegetarians eat highprotein animal products like eggs and dairy, but there are also protein-packed plant-based options like almonds (6 g per oz), quinoa (8 g per cup, cooked), and black beans (1 cup, cooked, has 15 g of the roughly 50 g of protein most adults need in a day). "Beans and other legumes such as split peas, chickpeas, and lentils are the protein superstars of the plant kingdom. We should ideally enjoy them every day," says Michael Greger, M.D., a founding member and fellow of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine. Iron is slightly trickier to get on a vegetarian diet, so be sure to combine iron-rich plant foods like beans, lentils, nuts, and spinach with something high in vitamin C such as citrus fruits, broccoli, chard, strawberries, or bell peppers for better iron absorption.

MYTH #4 You need meat to build muscle.

MYTHBUSTER You don't need meat-you need protein, which you can get from plants. In fact, a scientific review of available research found no difference between consumption of soy protein and animal protein in terms of gains in muscle mass. The trick is to make sure vou're getting all the essential amino acids your body needs to form protein for muscle, nine of which come only from food. Look for complete proteins, which contain all nine, or mix and match to get the full set. Some great veggie completeprotein pairings: rice and beans, pasta and peas, and whole-wheat bread and peanut butter. Complete proteins are also present in eggs, dairy, edamame, tofu, quinoa, chia seeds, and buckwheat, Entrekin says.

MYTH #5 Going vegetarian is healthy only for you.

MYTHBUSTER It's bigger than that. Not eating meat—or eating less of it—is good for the planet. A study in the journal Scientific Reports found that if every American ate 25% less meat, that would lower greenhouse gas emissions by about 1%. If everyone in the country went vegetarian, that would equal a reduction of about 5%. It might not sound like much, but every little bit helps. The issue is the methane and carbon dioxide cows emit. "Cattle are the number one agricultural source of greenhouse gases worldwide," says Grace Chen O'Neil, M.D., an emergency and lifestyle medicine doctor and secretary of the Vegan Society of Hawaii. Other ways in which eating less meat helps: Raising fewer livestock reduces deforestation, says Peter Stevenson, chief policy advisor for Compassion in World Farming. The demand for soy for livestock is huge-77% of global soy is used for animal feed-and that has led to the expansion of farmland into forests and other habitats, he says. Then there's waste: Animal waste "produces runoff that pollutes our waterways, harms aquatic and marine animals, destroys topsoil, and contaminates the air we breathe," Dr. Chen O'Neil says.

Lymphatic Drainage

Some products are meant to ease puffiness and bloat—here's which claims hold water.

BY GINNY GRAVES

f you've ever looked into what to do about that extra water weight, you may have heard that "lymphatic drainage" can help. Here's the story: Your body's lymphatic system includes a network of vessels, from your feet to your head, that collects excess fluid from your tissues and returns it to your bloodstream. The system typically works fine on its own, but when a lot of extra fluid accumulates-after surgery, for instance–doctors may recommend certain treatments and products to help the drainage along. But are they a good idea for healthy people with more typical bloating? Read on for expert advice.

MANUAL LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE (MLD)

WHAT IT IS: A specially trained massage therapist stimulates the lymphatic vessels, which lie just below the skin, by

gently stretching the tissue above them.

WHAT WE KNOW: MLD is often used to treat swelling that's due to medical issues: A 2020 study reported it to be beneficial after orthopedic injuries and surgery, and research shows that MLD can double the rate of lymphatic flow even in people without chronic swelling. But for healthy people, its benefits are less clear and cannot be expected to last, savs Stanley G. Rockson, M.D., director of the Center for Lymphatic and Venous Disorders at Stanford University School of Medicine. The increased flow continues only through the massage and for several minutes afterward. SHOULD YOU TRY IT? Yes, if your doctor recommends it for chronic swelling or you simply like the way it feels. Find a certified lymphedema therapist at lymphaticnetwork.org.



FACIAL ROLLERS

WHAT THEY ARE: Designed for selfmassage, a roller looks like a razor with a rolling-pin-like stone (often jade) where the blade would be. WHAT WE KNOW: These can work, but not necessarily by helping lymphatic flow. "Rollers can reduce puffiness, especially if you chill them in the fridge, since the coolness constricts blood vessels, reducing inflammation," says Laurel Geraghty, M.D., a dermatologist in Medford, OR. Japanese researchers have found that rollers increase circulation, which can reduce swelling. SHOULD YOU TRY ONE? Why not? It can't hurt, and it certainly feels good. **BRANDS TO TRY:** Kitsch Jade Crystal Facial Roller (\$24); Esker Allover Roller (\$65)

REBOUNDERS

WHAT THEY ARE: Mini trampolines you bounce on to get your fluids moving **WHAT WE KNOW:** Research shows that exercise, combined with other treatments, can reduce swelling from certain medical conditions such as lymphedema. "Muscle contractions increase lymphatic flow, so all forms of aerobic exercise are helpful," says Dr. Rockson. SHOULD YOU TRY ONE? Only if you really love to bounce. "The best exercise for lymphatic drainage is the one you enjoy and will do on a regular basis," says Dr. Rockson. "There's no reason rebounders would be better than walking or running."

BRANDS TO TRY: BCAN Foldable Mini Trampoline (\$150); JumpSport 200 Mini Trampoline (\$199)

KEEP YOUR BRAIN () () ()

Are your behaviors and attitudes aging your noggin or protecting it and keeping it sharp? These signs can tell you—plus, five ways to turn back your brain's clock.

BY LISA MULCAHY



t's a common sensation: feeling either younger or older than your age.

A person may be 42 but, during an afternoon of playing laser tag with their kids, feel as if they're 12 again. Or after a tough day of juggling meetings, supermarket slogs, and an emergency vet appointment, they may fall into bed feeling closer to 70.

When it comes to our brains, science shows that this age disconnect is an actual thing: Our brains can essentially age at a different rate than our bodies do. Depending on your health, lifestyle, and personality, you could be much younger (or older) in brain years than you realize. How can you tell whether your brain is fresh and vital or getting more senior by the second? Check out these signs, both good and bad, that can help you determine your true brain age, then read on for ways to keep your brain sharp or reverse course and make healthy changes now.

3 Signs that your brain is STAYING YOUNG

As research has shown, these signals indicate that your noggin is doing well.

You feel younger than you are

The age you feel, as opposed to your biological age, is known as your

"subjective age." And if your subjective age is lower than the number of years you've actually racked up here on Earth, that's a good thing! A study from South Korea found that people who felt younger than their ages showed fewer signs of physical brain aging as the years went by—in other words, having a youthful subjective age can positively affect the mechanism of how the brain works and how fast it ages structurally.

The researchers say more study is needed to determine the exact way in which feeling young affects the neural mechanisms; one theory is that the more youthful you think you are, the more physically and mentally active you are, and being active has been proven to be excellent for brain health. So do things that make you feel young. For instance, if your playlist is filled with songs from your teens (that "Back in my day..." nostalgia can really make you feel the years!), mix in some current tunes—it could help you feel cooler and more vital.

You speak more than one language

Canadian and Spanish researchers reported that bilingual people had more centralized and specialized neural connections; speaking two languages makes the brain "select" information more efficiently, and this saves the brain energy, which helps keep it young. Also, older bilingual



people don't use as much of their brains' frontal regions as those who speak only one language—this essentially saves wear and tear, creating a cognitive reserve that can pay off in the context of minor age-related cognitive decline or dementia. Not bilingual? Choose French, Japanese, Portuguese, or whatever language interests you and listen to language lessons as you're driving or cooking dinner. *Bueno!*

You live in the moment

Gray matter is essential for good memory. Mindfulness practices that help you stay in the present can also help preserve the brain's gray matter, according to a study from UCLA. Meditation is ideal—it's possible that when you meditate, you physically conserve the gray matter in your brain by reducing stress, which can hurt your noggin by damaging your immune response. Meditation may also stimulate neurons to form new dendritic trees and branches and create new synapses, helping cells communicate with one another—this may increase gray matter, says the research. Try meditating for at least 10 minutes as soon as you get out of bed to give your brain a peaceful, productive start to the day.

Signs that your brain may be AGING ON A FAST TRACK

Science says these may be indicators that your brain is aging quickly.

You're a cynical person

Finnish researchers published a fascinating study in which they found that very cynical older people had higher rates of dementia. Why? Negative stress could be the culprit; we know, for instance, that high levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, can have a very unhealthy effect on the brain and may stop people from thinking clearly. If your worldview tends to be cynical (defined as a belief that others are generally selfish or dishonest), start to notice when that attitude comes up with regard to something or someone and, in those moments, try to actively change your mindset: Do some deep breathing and choose to think of something positive to say.

Your attention wanders a lot

All of us know how hard it is to concentrate when we're excited or nervous. If you find it really, really tough to focus when you're stressed on a consistent basis, though, you might want to talk to your doctor. A research team from the University of Southern California found that being distracted easily was a sign of cognitive aging. This trait can show up in the brain as early as age 30 and could be one sign of eventual Alzheimer's. It's tied to arousal—if you're suddenly confronted with a shocking, stressful situation, for example, the frontoparietal network of your brain may not respond sufficiently to signals from your locus coeruleus, which helps you focus. This happens most often in older people, but if you tend to have trouble focusing while under stress, cognitive testing could help you find out whether you have a predisposition to cognitive decline. Brain training, perhaps through doing puzzles or playing games, may be helpful in building up vour concentration skills too.

Your friends mention that you're forgetting things

Blanking on dinner with your friends once can be chalked up to having a lot on your plate, but standing them up multiple times without meaning to can signal a problem. If your friends mention that your behavior seems different, take their feedback seriously. "The patients I see who have a memory problem usually don't recognize that they have one," says Thomas R. Vidic, M.D., a fellow of the American Academy of Neurology who practices at the Elkhart Clinic in Elkhart, IN. "They're convinced there's nothing wrong with them when there is. So I would say it's very important to pay attention to what your friends and family are telling you. Have they noticed that you are having memory problems? If so, pay attention to them—it's time to get a professional opinion."

You're tired in the daytime

It's a key sign noted in several studies, such as the Mayo Clinic Study of Aging. Getting sleepy in the daytime means your brain is not getting the proper restorative "clean-out" rest it needs at night, and that can cause direct physical brain changes tied to aging. "Good-quality sleep is a really important protector of the brain," says Neill Graff-Radford, M.D., a professor of neurology at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, FL. "Research has shown that sleep apnea can actually make the hippocampus-a key part of your brain having to do with learning and memory—smaller. Sleep apnea causes a lack of oxygen, which can damage the brain, but research also shows that treating sleep apnea can return it toward normal. You need seven and a half to eight hours of good sleep per night for brain health."

5 Easy ways to TURN BACK YOUR BRAIN'S CLOCK

Here, straightforward things you can do to help energize that gray matter.

Try the MIND diet

The MIND Diet (the Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay) is a food plan rich in leafy greens, berries, nuts, fish, and olive oil, and it even includes a little wine. Not only is MIND delicious, but it can turn back cognitive age by up to seven and a half years, according to 2015 research. More than 900 men and women with an average age of 81.4 detailed their diets and had their cognitive function

HOW TO FEEL YOUR BEST AT ANY AGE



Learn more about keeping your brain sharp—and loving all aspects of your life—in our downloadable guide Age Joyfully, now available to mem-

bers of **Prevention Premium**. Find it at **prevention.com/age-joyfully**.

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checked over a period of more than four years. In another 2015 study, participants who carefully followed the MIND diet—limiting foods like red meat, sugary treats, and fried foods—cut their Alzheimer's disease risk by 53%, and those who followed the diet pretty well cut their risks by 35%.

Take the stairs

For every flight of stairs you climb every day, your brain age drops by 0.58 years, according to research from Concordia University. Even better is when you learn to like that upward hike. "You should do the exercise you enjoy doing," says Dr. Vidic. "This will enable your brain to release hormones that will help you stick to your workout." So put on your headphones, cue up a playlist you love, and carve out time to climb stairs or get similar exercise at work or at home for 150 minutes total per week.

Talk out your feelings to supportive friends

A fascinating new study led by Joel Salinas, M.D., of New York University's Grossman School of Medicine found that having social connections with good listeners you can trust means you


release your problems and stress easily, and that may slow brain aging. When you feel stressed, call your mom, Zoom with your sister, text with your best friend—get everything out, and make sure you're available to lend an ear whenever those close to you need it.

📕 Walk fast, often

If you're middle-aged or older, you could improve your memory by walking briskly three to five times a week, according to research from Texas. In the study, older people with early signs of memory loss raised their cognitive scores after they began walking frequently. Start slowly, then work on increasing your speed gradually over the course of a walking week—you'll gain a sense of accomplishment as well as a physical brain boost.

Stay hopeful

"A positive attitude may be associated with good cognitive aging," says Dr. Graff-Radford. "I have met a number of centenarians, including Holocaust survivors, and they light up the room when they enter it. As an example, I met a wonderful woman who was a survivor, and she died at over 100 years old—she was older, but she would speak to you with such interest and had such an extraordinarily positive view of the world.



More research should be done in this area." Take this inspirational example to heart—looking on the bright side is a great way to stay happy and curious, no matter what age you happen to be!

<u>TOOLS TO</u> PROTECT YOUR BRAIN

Learn more about how to preserve your memory and boost your brain health in a free webinar series *Prevention* is hosting with the American Federation for Aging Research this spring. Find out about the power of walking in April and what normal brain aging looks like in May. **Get all the details** at <u>afar.org/events</u>.

GETTY IMAGES.





The *Prevention* Test Kitchen is piled high with boxes, bags, and packages, and we've been munching away for months in search of the best healthy food. Here, our top snack picks—sure to satisfy every craving.



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BEST PUFF LESSEREVIL Sour Cream and **Onion Sun Poppers** Watermelon and pumpkin seeds are blended into these protein-rich puffs. The plant-based sour cream and onion seasoning kept our tasters coming back for more, and since a serving is 45 pieces, you'll feel great about grabbing another handful. \$4, lesserevil.com

BEST 2 DRIED FRUIT

RIND Kiwi Chips One ingredient is all it takes to make these crunchy vitamin Crich kiwi chips with a tangy taste. Snack on the immune-boosting bites on their own or spread with a scoop of yogurt and a squeeze of honey. \$5. rindsnacks.com

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price Cheap constant access to piping hot media Protect your downloadings from Big brother Safer, than torrent-trackers

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FOOD







BEST PICKLES CLEVELAND KITCHEN Dilly Garlic Pickle Chips

Sliced cucumbers flavored with a mix of seasonings like bold garlic, herby dill, mustard seeds, and allspice provide you with a gut boost thanks to live active cultures from fermentation. Snack right from the container for a crisp and fresh

bite, pair with a slice of Cheddar, or stack on a sandwich. *\$6, clevelandkitchen* .com

BEST NUT SNACK SPIRIT ALMOND Seaweed Dry Roasted Almonds

Almonds get tossed in

4

a mouthwatering combination of sesame oil–infused seaweed, mushroom powder, and salt. Plus, each pack serves up a heap of vitamins and minerals, including 50% of your daily vitamin E, which helps protect your body from damaging free radicals. *\$3, spiritalmond.com*

5 <u>BEST</u> <u>FRUIT CHEW</u>

SOLELY Organic Mango & Orange Whole Fruit Gummies

Calling all fruit-snack fans: This sweet-tart version is great for kids and adults alike. Plus, these gummies, full of fresh mango and orange flavor with no added sugars, are made from imperfect produce that could otherwise be thrown away, helping decrease food waste. *\$8, solely.com*

BEST CRACKER LESLEY STOWE Raincoast Crisps Wild Blueberry and Almond Made with chia and



8

pumpkin seeds and big chunks of almonds and whole dried blueberries, these sweet and savory crackers are the perfect addition to a cheese board or great for snacking by themselves. Try topping with a spread of blueberry jam and a slice of sharp Cheddar. \$7, lesleystowe.com

7 BEST POPCORN

SEAPOINT FARMS Mighty Lil' Crunchy Corn Pink Himalayan Salt

Craving something crunchy? Our snackers adored this partially popped corn for its crisp yet tender, slightly salty bite. Even with only three ingredients, each serving provides iron and fiber. \$4, seapointfarms.com

BEST COTTAGE

CULTURE

LACTOSE FREE

COTTAGE CHEESE

14 G PROTEIN 2% MILKEAT

GOOD CULTURE Lactose-Free Cottage Cheese

This creamy favorite boasts 14 g of protein per serving and is lactose-free, so those with dairy sensitivities can enjoy a scoop too! Snack sweet by topping it with sliced strawberries, or go savory with a drizzle of olive oil and crisp, fresh cucumbers. \$3.50 for 15 oz, goodculture.com

8 XE

Better Than Popcorr

MIGHTY LIL' CRUNCHY CORN PINK HIMALAYAN SALT

PUNCHY

HUNGRY For More?

Our testing went way beyond snacks: Find the best drinks, sauces, grains, and other tasty must-haves at <u>prevention.com</u> /2022-food-awards.

BREAKFAST Rhubarb Breakfast Muffins

The pink veggie adds a tart punch to these treats, sweetened only with maple syrup or honey.

ACTIVE **20 MIN**. TOTAL **50 MIN**. MAKES **12 MUFFINS**

21/2 cups almond flour

- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup pure maple syrup or honey
- ¹⁄₄ cup melted extra virgin coconut oil
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- large stalk rhubarb (about 4 oz), trimmed, cut into ½-in. pieces

1. Heat oven to 375°F. Line 12-cup muffin pan with paper liners.

In large bowl, whisk together both flours, cinnamon, baking powder, and salt. In medium bowl, whisk together eggs, maple syrup, coconut oil, and vanilla. Fold egg mixture into flour mixture until just combined (batter will be thick).

4. Divide batter among muffin-pan cups (about scant ¼ cup each), and

scatter about 6 pieces of rhubarb per muffin on top, partially pressing into batter. Bake until wooden pick inserted into centers of muffins comes out clean, 22 to 25 min. Let cool in pan 5 min., then transfer to wire rack to cool completely.

PER MUFFIN 239 cal, 6 g pro, 16 g carb, 3 g fiber, 9.5 g sugars (8 g added sugars), 17.5 g fat (5.5 g sat fat), 31 mg chol, 122 mg sodium

EYE ON THE PRIZE Rhubarb contains an array of nutrients that

array of nutrients that contribute to good eye health: beta-carotene, lutein, zeaxanthin, and vitamin A.

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Contains 8g of total fat per 10-fl-oz serving.
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Listen Up!

Try these foods to support your hearing.

BY ALYSSA JUNG

usic blasting through headphones, loud construction booms. screaming sirens such noises can damage your hearing over time. But there's something you can do to help protect those eardrums: Mind what you eat. "Increasing your intake of antioxidants, folic acid, omega-3s, and B vitamins is part of a healthy-hearing plan because it supports good blood pressure and blood vessel health, which is key to preserving our hearing," says Hope Lanter, Au.D., lead audiologist at hear.com, a hearing-loss resource. Keep these foods in regular rotation:

CASHEWS

These creamy nuts are an excellent source of magnesium and zinc. Research suggests that magnesium may help lessen damage from loud noises by protecting the little hairs in our ears that act as a barrier, and it also supports good blood flow, which is vital to the health of those teensy strands. And zinc supports the immune system, helping us fight off potential ear infections that could cause hearing loss, says Jeremy Akers, M.S., Ph.D., director of the graduate dietetics program at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA.

VEGAN MAC 'N' CHEESE Cook 12 oz **pasta** per pkg. directions. In small saucepan on medium, sauté 1 small onion (finely chopped) in 1Tbsp olive oil until tender. Stir in 2 cloves garlic (pressed) and cook 1 min. Stir in 1 cup raw cashews, 1¹/₂ tsp Dijon mustard, and a pinch of cavenne, then 2 cups water, and simmer until cashews are tender, 12 min. Transfer to blender along with ¹/₃ cup nutritional yeast and puree until smooth. Transfer back to saucepan and simmer until thickened. Toss with pasta.

COCONUT WATER

To hear, we must maintain the right fluid balance in our inner ear; this fluid helps turn noises into identifiable sounds in the brain, says Akers. Potassium helps control the body's fluid balance, and coconut water is brimming with it.



SPICED SPLIT PEAS

In small saucepan, combine 1 cup split peas; 3 cloves garlic (pressed); 1 tsp **ground cumin**; ¹/₂ tsp each ground coriander, smoked paprika, and kosher salt; and $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups water and simmer until peas are tender, about 1 hr. Transfer to food processor; puree with 2 Tbsp oil and 1 Tbsp lemon juice until smooth. Serve with grilled bread.

TUNA

The omega-3s in this sandwich filler are anti-inflammatory chronic inflammation

PEACH-MANGO SMOOTHIE

In blender, puree 1 cup **frozen peaches**, 1 cup **frozen mango**, ½ cup **plain Greek yogurt**, 1½ cups **coconut water**, and ¼ cup **fresh mint** until smooth.

SPLIT PEAS

This soup star is high in folate, an important B vitamin—not getting enough can impact cellular function in a way that has the potential to affect your hearing down the line. Split peas are also a good source of magnesium and iron; research suggests that iron deficiency may be linked to hearing loss. can damage blood vessels, reducing blood flow needed for good hearing, as well as cause nerve damage that may mess with signals between your ears and your brain.

OPEN-FACE TUNA-OLIVE SAMMY

In bowl, toss 4 Kalamata olives (finely chopped), 1 strip lemon zest (thinly sliced), 1 tsp fresh lemon juice, and 1 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley. Toss one 6-oz can solid white tuna (flaked) with 1½ Tbsp each olive oil and fresh lemon juice. Layer on 2 slices toasted bread with sliced tomato and hardboiled egg, then top with olive relish.

FOOD



BUST OUT YOUR BLENDER

IT'S THE MASTERFUL MULTITASKER THAT CAN TRANSFORM THE POWERFUL, HEALTHY INGREDIENTS ON THESE PAGES INTO ALL KINDS OF WINNERS: DREAMY DIP, CREAMY SAUCE, BRIGHT RELISH, AND MORE. TIME TO MIX IT UPI

GARLIC-CITRUS OIL

ACTIVE **5 MIN.** TOTAL **5 MIN.** MAKES ²/₃ **CUP**

- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 lemon, halved
- 1/2 navel orange, peeled
- 1/2 cup olive oil

In blender, puree garlic, lemon (rind and all), orange, and oil until smooth. Strain oil and discard pulp. Refrigerate up to 2 weeks.

PER TBSP 93 cal, 0 g pro, 2 g carb, 0 g fiber, 0.5 g sugars (0 g added sugars), 10 g fat (1.5 g sat fat), 0 mg chol, 1 mg sodium

• **KEBAB TIME** Use the oil to

create a proteinpacked dish everyone will love.

In large bowl, toss ¹/₃ cup garlic-citrus oil and ¹/₂ tsp each kosher salt and pepper with 1¹/₂ lbs boneless, skinless chicken breast (cut into 1¹/₂-in. pieces). Refrigerate 30 min. Thread onto skewers and grill on medium, turning occasionally, 5 min. Continue grilling, basting with ¹/₃ cup garlic-citrus oil, until cooked through, 5 to 6 min. more.

FLAVOR HACK

You'll boost taste and use less salt when you add a drizzle of blended herbs, fruit, and oil to a dish, thanks to the citrusy notes. That's a win for everything from your heart to your kidneys.

FOOD

BANANA-CHOCOLATE CHIP MUFFINS

ACTIVE **15 MIN**. TOTAL **40 MIN**. MAKES **12**

- 3 large ripe bananas (1½ cups)
- 2 large eggs
- ¹∕₃ cup maple syrup
- 1/4 cup coconut oil, melted
- 2 Tbsp milk
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 cups oldfashioned oats
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp kosher salt
- 1/2 cup bittersweet chocolate chips, divided
- 1 cup unsweetened flaked coconut

1. Heat oven to 350°F. Line 12-cup muffin pan with paper liners. 2. In blender, place bananas, eggs, maple syrup, coconut oil, milk, and vanilla. Top with oats, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Puree until smooth, scraping down side of blender as necessary. Add 1/4 cup

chocolate chips; pulse twice. **3.** Divide among muffin cups and top with coconut and remaining chips. Bake until wooden pick inserted into centers comes out clean, 18 to 22 min.

PER MUFFIN 246 cal, 4 g pro, 29 g carb, 4 g fiber, 13 g sugars (8.5 g added sugars), 14 g fat (10.5 g sat fat), 31 mg chol, 208 mg sodium

NOT TOO SWEET

This batter, when baked into muffins, is proof that you don't need mountains of sugar to satisfy your sweet tooth. Maple syrup is less processed than cane sugar and contains trace minerals.

GRILLED ZUCCHINI DIP

ACTIVE **20 MIN**. TOTAL **20 MIN**. MAKES **2 CUPS**

- 1 Ib small zucchini (about 3), quartered lengthwise
- 4 scallions
- 3 Tbsp olive oil, divided, plus more for drizzling Kosher salt
- 1 clove garlic
- ¹/₄ cup tahini
- 2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 cup mint leaves, divided Vegetables and crackers, for serving

1. Heat grill to medium. Toss zucchini and scallions with 1 Tbsp oil and ½ tsp salt. Grill, turning occasionally, until charred and tender. 6 to 8 min. Transfer zucchini and 3 scallions to blender. 2. Add garlic, tahini, lemon juice, and 2Tbsp mint; pulse to combine. With blender running on low, drizzle in remaining 2 Tbsp oil; puree until mostly smooth, increasing speed if needed. Transfer to serving bowl.

3. Chop remaining mint and grilled scallion. Drizzle additional oil over dip if desired, then sprinkle with scallion and mint. Serve with vegetables and crackers if desired.

PER ¼-CUP SERVING 108 cal, 2 g pro, 4 g carb, 1 g fiber, 1.5 g sugars (0 g added sugars), 10 g fat (1.5 g sat fat), 0 mg chol, 128 mg sodium

SUPER SNACK

Zucchini and creamy tahini have the perfect mix of nutrients to satisfy your hunger and give you energy when blended into a delish dip: fiber, protein, fat, and good old H₂O.

1

MIX MASTER

For the smoothest results, add items to the blender in this order so they'll be well incorporated: liquid, soft fruits and veggies, leafy greens, and dried ingredients (like seeds). Then top with ice and other frozen ingredients.

START SLOWLY

When blending anything (from smoothies to sauces), begin slowly and gradually increase speed.

DUICK CLEANUP

Fill the jar halfway with warm water, add a couple of drops of dish soap, and run on medium-high for up to a minute.

STONE FRUIT RELISH

ACTIVE 10 MIN. TOTAL 10 MIN. MAKES ABOUT 3 CUPS

- 1/2 Ib nectarines or peaches, pitted, each cut into 6 pieces
- 1/2 Ib orange or red heirloom tomatoes (about 3), each cut into 6 pieces
- 1/2 English cucumber, peeled and coarsely chopped
- ¹/₂ small red chile, seeded and quartered
- 1 scallion, chopped

- ¹/₂ cup cilantro
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp sherry vinegar Kosher salt and pepper

 In blender, pulse nectarines, tomatoes, cucumber, chile, scallion, cilantro, oil, vinegar, and ½ tsp each salt and pepper to finely chop.
Spoon relish over cooked white fish, chicken, or steak, or toss with salad greens.

PER ½-**CUP SERVING** 66 cal, 1 g pro, 6 g carb, 1 g fiber, 4 g sugars (0 g added sugars), 4.5 g fat (0.5 g sat fat), 0 mg chol, 164 mg sodium

GOOD-FOR-You dollop

Nectarines provide fiber, which is ideal to help you stay regular, maintain a healthy weight, and remain full between meals. Sneak more fiber into dinner by blending the fruit into this relish.

WALNUT AND

ACTIVE **25 MIN**. TOTAL **25 MIN**. SERVES **4**

- 12 oz pasta
- 12 oz green beans, trimmed and cut into thirds
- 1 cup walnuts
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- ¹/₂ cup parsley
- 1/2 cup cilantro
- 1 tsp grated lemon zest plus 2 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic Kosher salt and pepper
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 peppers (red and yellow), seeded and cut into 1-in. pieces

 Cook pasta per pkg. directions, adding green beans during last 2 min. of cooking. Reserve
cup pasta cooking liquid, then drain.
Meanwhile, in blender, puree walnuts, vegetable broth, parsley, cilantro, lemon zest and juice, garlic, and 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper until smooth. 3. Heat large skillet on medium-high. Add oil and cook peppers, tossing occasionally, until just tender, 3 to 4 min. Add drained pasta, green beans, and walnut sauce and toss, adding enough reserved pasta liquid to coat pasta.

PER SERVING 572 cal, 18 g pro, 79 g carb, 9 g fiber, 6 g sugars (0 g added sugars), 22 g fat (2.5 g sat fat), 0 mg chol, 167 mg sodium

VEGGIE Delight

Blending walnuts into a pasta sauce ups omega-3s, copper, and fiber, all key for a heart-healthy dinner. Bonus: It makes a plant-based meal seem decadent and creamy without any dairy!

NATURE'S TREAT

Oat milk is a nutritious and sustainable alternative to dairy milk, and adding pureed berries gives it the perfect natural sweetness.

STRAWBERRY OAT MILK

ACTIVE **5 MIN**. TOTAL **5 MIN**. SERVES **4**

- 1 cup oldfashioned oats
- 1 lb strawberries, hulled
- 2 Tbsp maple syrup

In blender, puree oats with 3 cups water until smooth. Add strawberries and maple syrup and puree until smooth.

PER SERVING 135 cal, 3 g pro, 28 g carb, 4 g fiber, 12 g sugars (6 g added sugars), 2 g fat (0.5 g sat fat), 0 mg chol, 2 mg sodium

PREVENTION

FAMILY

Social Skills Made Simple

tiquette and parenting expert Catherine Newman is back with her trademark humor and wisdom, this time teaching kids to communicate with care in her new book, What Can I Say? A Kid's Guide to Super-Useful Social Skills That Will Help You Get Along and Express Yourself. Here are a few of her tactful tips.

BY MARY GILES

EXPRESSING EMPATHY

Empathy means trying to understand what someone else is feeling. If someone feels bad, empathy is a gift your child can share.

PRACTICE THIS

Encourage your child to say "Tell me more—I'm listening" (instead of "You'll feel better") and "I like being with you even when you're sad" (instead of "Cheer up!").

BORTTING A

Let your child know there's no need to act puzzled, laugh, or comment on the name if they're not sure how to pronounce it correctly. Making a sincere effort is the way to go.

PRACTICE THIS

Your child can simply ask someone to say or repeat their name, then say it back to make sure they've got it right.

PERSUADING SOMEONE

Sometimes your child will really want to convince someone to do or think something, like coaxing you into getting a pet lizard or convincing a friend about an important belief they hold.

PRACTICE THIS

Tell your child to start with that favorite word: "Please." Have them build a case by drawing on three things data or research, past experience, and their own passion—while speaking respectfully, stopping to listen to the other person, and being prepared to compromise.

Etiquette is really just a fussy word for describing how we can strengthen our relationships with people. For kids (and, um, adults too) this means, among other things, practicing empathy, curiosity, and persuasion. I promise your kids will find these communication skills more useful and rewarding than, say, cursive handwriting." —*Catherine Newman*

How to ID an Eating Disorder

he pandemic has taken a toll on kids' well-being. Now several studies show that an uptick in pediatric eating disorders is part of the collateral damage. While eating disorders tend to emerge during adolescence, research reveals that they may develop at a younger age. Scary stuff. Even more troubling: It's not always obvious that a child is suffering—their weight might look perfectly "normal." Use this info to identify and address potential issues.

BY HOLLY PEVZNER

Be mindful when you talk

The vast majority of 10-year-olds are scared of being fat, according to the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA), so it's wise to be aware of how you talk about weight: Avoid using "fat" as an insult, warning kids not to overeat, and remarking on your own body dissatisfaction or diet. Even teasing about food ("Wow, someone has a big appetite!") can be troubling for some kids. While any child can show signs of disordered eating, some may be more at risk of an eating disorder, including kids who are related to someone with an eating disorder, those who identify as LGBTQ, children with a diet-treated chronic illness like diabetes or celiac disease, and kids with ADHD.

Look more deeply at picky eating

Many kids are finicky with food, but "picky eating that gets worse as a child emerges from toddlerhood can be a sign of an eating disorder called avoidant restrictive food intake disorder [ARFID]," says Laurel Weaver, M.D., Ph.D., psychiatric director of the Eating Disorder Assessment and Treatment Program at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Unlike some eating disorders, ARFID isn't related to body image. Clues that ARFID may be in play include a child showing a lack of interest in eating, avoiding foods because of their texture, voicing worries about things like choking, and having growth/nutritional issues because of food limitations. Find more signs at nationaleatingdisorders.org.

Watch for these signs

Kids love hunkering down in their rooms, but children with eating disorders often eat in hiding. You might notice your child's eating habits becoming more restrictive, which is especially noteworthy if accompanied by mood changes and physical signs, says Stephenie Wallace, M.D., an associate professor of adolescent medicine at Heersink School of Medicine at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Some other behavioral red flags:

- New interest in a restrictive diet
- Interest in cooking, but not eating what they make
- Self-criticism for eating or not exercising
- Consistently visiting the bathroom or showering right after meals
- New complaints of abdominal pain, food reactions, or light-headedness

Take action

"First, don't be afraid you're going to 'give' your child an eating disorder by addressing your concern," says Dr. Weaver. In fact, early intervention is key. "It can make the recovery process shorter and more effective." says pediatrician and registered dietitian Natalie Muth, M.D., R.D.N., director of the WELL healthyliving clinic in Carlsbad, CA. Be calm, compassionate, and direct ("I love you, and I'm worried about you. I've noticed you've been restricting food, and I'd like to talk about it"). Call, chat, or text with NEDA (nationaleating disorders.org)-and, of course, reach out to your child's pediatrician.

Caring for an Older Pet

ou may or may not relate to the bit of extra effort it takes your older pet to get up off the couch, but it's definitely one sign that they need a little more TLC. Cats and dogs are considered senior at around age 7 to 10—a bit younger for large- and giant-breed dogs. Here's how to help keep them happy and healthy in their golden years.

BY LIZZ SCHUMER

Watch What They Eat and Drink

Senior pets may need food that's easier to digest and lower in calories and that contains certain nutrients to help them age well, explains Jamie Richardson, D.V.M., of Small Door Veterinary in New York City. Some may also benefit from omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidant supplements. When you do switch up their diet with the help of your vet, look for a brand with an AAFCO statement of nutritional adequacy. Hydration is also key, especially for cats, who are prone to kidney diseasefeeding them wet food can help. Because extra weight puts stress on organs and joints and increases your pet's risk of cancer, kidney disease, osteoarthritis, and other ailments, be sure you're feeding them appropriate portions and limiting treats to special occasions. "When a dog under 25 pounds, for example, gains one or two pounds, that's the equivalent of you or me gaining 20 pounds," explains Carol Osborne, D.V.M., owner of Chagrin Falls Pet Clinic in Ohio.

Make Some Changes at Home

If your pet has arthritis or is moving a little more slowly, try installing a ramp to the porch for your dog and providing a litter box with lower sides or a ramp for your cat. "Older pets may struggle with balance and can find hard, slippery floors stressful to walk on," Richardson says. Laying down mats or rugs can help them navigate surfaces like tile and hardwood. Keeping their nails short can also help with grooming, as older cats may struggle to use scratching posts. Older pets may also have a harder time bending down to eat or drink, so consider an elevated food-and-water-bowl bench. But as you adapt your home to suit your senior pet, avoid adding too many new items or rearranging furniture if they have poor memory or eyesight, Richardson says; pets with those issues do better with a consistent environment.

Pay Extra Attention to Them

Senior pets should visit the vet every six months for a checkup and get labs done every year, Richardson says. Those with health conditions might need

more frequent visits. In between, go over your pet's body regularly to check for lumps, bumps, or skin changes, and tell your vet as soon as you notice any. Watch out for behavioral changes too: If a usually social cat is hiding, a dog loses interest in walks, or a pet is moving gingerly, shows a change in eating or drinking habits, or starts waking more frequently at night, staring into space, bumping into things, or just generally acting "off," it's time for an extra checkup.

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Stay Sharp

Fun ways to give your brain a little workout

IN THE MIDDLE

For each pair, find a word that creates two new compound words or phrases. It should work as the ending of the first word and the beginning of the second.

WASTE	MARK
UNDER	HORSE
BLUE	LIGHT
PLANET	BOUND

ADD IT UP

Use each of the numbers from 1 to 9 to fill in the blanks with a correct sum.





Auswers: In the Middle: Land, sea, sky, earth. Add It Up: 341 + 586 = 927 (other answers are possible). Coded Message: If you are in a bad mood, go for a walk. —Hippocrates.



CODED MESSAGE

Use the coordinates here to fill in some wise advice and the name of the person who wrote it long ago.



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