

MANAGED CARE EMPLOYEE WELLNESS NEWSLETTER



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Healthy Glow Isn't Healthy

As summer dies down some people longing for that sun kissed look might think about hitting the tanning booth for a "healthy glow". But, according to U.S. and British researchers, there is no such thing as a healthy tan.

They said in their review of published studies that tans and skin cancer both begin with DNA damage caused by exposure to ultraviolet light but many people, especially the young, ignore or are unaware of this danger in a quest for a bronzed body.

"The signals in the cells that induce sun tanning appear to be DNA damage," said Dorothy Bennett, a cell biologist at St. George's, University of London, who wrote one of the papers.

DNA damage is the first step in getting a mutation in cells that could lead to cancer, so there can't be anything like a safe tan."

The World Health Organization estimates that as many as 60,000 people each year die from too much ultraviolet light, mostly from malignant melanoma — the deadliest form of skin cancer.

The link between skin cancer and damage from ultraviolet light from the sun or tanning booths is well known but the review published in the journal *Pigment Cell & Melanoma Research* suggests that even a little exposure is dangerous.

Another problem is that while genetic and other factors also contribute to skin cancer risk, mixed messages about the safety of ultraviolet light confuses the public, Bennett added in a telephone interview.

Getting some sunshine is important because ultraviolet light spurs the body to produce vitamin D. But people need far less ultraviolet exposure for this than it takes to tan, she said.

"A lot of young people don't know about the scientific evidence," she said. "Anything that causes mutations in your cells increases your risk of cancer."

Article from Reuters

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Men's Corner: Hair Loss Options



Shaving your head may seem totally chic when done voluntarily — Justin Timberlake, Jake Gyllenhaal or James Blake, anyone? — but it's not quite as cool when nature beats you to it. In fact, for millions of men, hair loss can be downright traumatizing, creating a loss of confidence that debilitates even the most cocksure. But if you're losing your locks — whether it's genetic fate, extreme stress or another medical reason — you don't have to take follicle failure lying down. Treatments approved by the Food and Drug Administration are available through your dermatologist, while proper nutrition and stress reduction can do wonders in preserving what you've still got

But why does hair fall out in the first place? "Genetics are the main culprit," says Michael Eidelman, a dermatologist in New York City, who adds that everything from a lack of vitamins, thyroid disease and anemia from a poor diet can also contribute to losing your locks. Unfortunately, there aren't a lot of really good options out there," Eidelman says. "So it's important to ask yourself how much it actually bothers you, and then discuss your options with a dermatologist."

Propecia

This is the only FDA-approved oral therapy for hair loss that gets proven results, Eidelman says.

Rogaine

Also proven to regrow at least some hair in 85 percent of men with hereditary hair loss, Rogaine foam or liquid solution is applied directly to your scalp, twice a day, every day. "It's not the most effective treatment of all, because in my experience it has the least long-term efficacy," Eidelman says.

Hair transplantation

Board-certified plastic surgeons have been successfully performing this type of procedure for more than 30 years, and the results are more natural looking than ever.

*By Mitch Rustad
Content provided by Revolution Health Group*

Avoiding Adult Acne



Won't they ever go away? As an adult, you had hoped pimples would be a thing of the past, but for many adults, they continue to mar otherwise healthy skin. For some, acne may be even worse in adulthood than adolescence.

More than simply a cosmetic problem, acne can greatly impact your quality of life, no matter what your age or the severity of your condition. If you are battling recurring skin breakouts, finding a path to clearer skin is vital to your self-esteem, body image, and mental health.

There is no single cause of acne, and because of this, there is no surefire way to avoid it or control it. Acne is influenced by several factors, many of which are out of your control. However, the way you treat your skin does play an important role. With a little know-how, you can minimize, or potentially eliminate, occasional acne outbreaks on your face, back, shoulders, neck, chest, limbs, or elsewhere, merely by changing a few small behaviors.

1. **Take a close look at your hair and skin products.** Simply switching to "noncomedogenic" hair and skin products could make a big difference in the appearance of your skin. When you use hair conditioners, gels, pomades, shaving products, cosmetics, moisturizers, sunscreens, and other products that contain oil, you can clog your pores and suffer a breakout. Check the labels on your hair and skin products to see if they are marked oil-free and "noncomedogenic." Also, consider whether you truly need every product you use. Even products marked "dermatologist tested" can cause acne for some people. Minimizing the number of products you use may help further reduce outbreaks. When exercising, wear as little make-up as possible. Even oil-free and noncomedogenic cosmetics can clog pores if worn during heavy exercise.
2. **Think about your hands.** Do you often rest your hands on your chin or cheeks or rub your nose? Doing so can encourage the growth of bacteria and cause infection to the areas most inflamed by adult acne. Your strict "hands off" policy should hold during times of breakout, too. Picking or squeezing can drive acne bacteria deeper into the skin, leading to more inflammation and possible permanent scarring.
3. **Don't let sweat stick around.** Rinse off as soon as possible after you work out. Physical activity heats up the body, causing perspiration to mix with surface skin oils. Together, they trap substances in your pores. If a quick rinse isn't possible, towel off and change into dry clothes as soon as you can. Sitting around in your sweaty clothes, especially if they are tight-fitting, can lead to acne mechanica on your chest, back, and other parts of the body. Also, you should avoid wearing tight headbands or hats that rub against your skin. If you wear a helmet or any other safety gear with straps, be sure to wash the straps frequently to reduce bacteria.
4. **Avoid over washing or using harsh scrubs.** Acne is not caused by dirt, so washing frequently with harsh substances such as alcohol-based products won't solve the problem. In fact, it may make the situation worse by prompting excess oil production and more blemishes. Be good to your skin by washing gently from under the jaw to the hairline with a mild soap once or twice a day. You might find that simply washing with lukewarm water and using clean hands rather than a washcloth works well for you. To avoid irritating or inflaming your skin, pat—rather than rub—it dry with a soft towel. Also, be cautious of cleansing products that claim to be formulated for acne prone skin, as these can leave healthy skin dry and irritated.
5. **Monitor your stress levels.** A recent study revealed that emotional stress may have a significant influence on acne. When you're under stress, your body produces stress hormones such as cortisol, which can stimulate an over-production of oil from the sebaceous glands in the skin. When this excess oil mixes with dead skin cells and bacteria, it can cause acne to develop or become worse. If you suffer from stress regularly, try to take short breaks throughout the day to stretch and practice deep breathing exercises. Exercising regularly is another great way to ease anxiety and reduce stress. If all else fails, consider reprioritizing your to-do list and eliminating any items you can.

Article from *RealAge.com*

Giving Fido His Medicine

So your poor dog is ill but you're struggling to give him his medicine? Don't worry; there are methods available to make administering medicine easier for you.

Pills: Open your dog's mouth and place the pill on top of his tongue, as far back as possible. Then close his mouth and stroke his throat until you see him swallow. Give him a treat afterwards to ensure that the pill was swallowed. Another way to do it is to hide the pills in some cheese or a sausage. Pill plungers are also very effective.

Liquids: Tilt your dog's head up, and place the neck of the bottle (a syringe will also work) inside his cheek pouch, between his molar teeth and cheek. Use your fingers to seal his lips around the bottle. Then slowly pour the liquid in. You will be able to administer large doses in this manner.





True Comfort Food

Regardless of the cause, when we're stressed we often counter intuitively turn to diet-busting goodies for comfort. Instead of soothing our frayed nerves, many of them ultimately make us feel worse.

Take the classic, curling up with a pint of ice cream. It's a total backfire. Why? Sweets are insidious: After the initial rush, the body's insulin response kicks in, causing a sudden blood-sugar drop that triggers the release of stress hormones. Soon you're feeling more jangled than you were before you inhaled that whole container of Chunky Monkey. And alcohol, of course, is a wolfish stimulant in calm sheep's clothing.

But true comfort foods do exist:

- **Berries, any berries.** Eat them one by one instead of M&Ms when the pressure's on. For those tough times when tension tightens your jaw, try rolling a frozen berry around in your mouth. And then another, and another. Since the carbs in berries turn to sugar very slowly, you won't have a blood-sugar crash. The bonus: They're a good source of vitamin C, which helps fight a jump in cortisol, a stress hormone.
- **Guacamole.** If you're craving something creamy, look no further. Avocados are loaded with B vitamins, which stress quickly depletes and which your body needs in order to maintain nerves and brain cells. Plus, their creaminess comes from healthy fat. Scoop up the stuff with whole-grain baked chips -- crunching keeps you from gritting your teeth.
- **Mixed nuts.** Just an ounce will do. Walnuts help replace those stress-depleted B vitamins, Brazil nuts give you a whopping amount of zinc (which is also drained by high anxiety), and almonds boost your E, which helps fight cellular damage linked to chronic stress. Buy nuts in the shell and think of it as multitasking: With every squeeze of the nutcracker, you're releasing a little tension.
- **Oranges.** People who take 1,000 milligrams of C before giving a speech have lower levels of cortisol and lower blood pressures than those who don't. So lean back, take a deep breath, and concentrate on peeling a large orange. The 5-minute mindfulness break will ease your mind, and you'll get a bunch of C as well.
- **Asparagus.** Each tender stalk is a source of folic acid, a natural mood lightener. Dip the spears in fat-free yogurt or sour cream for a hit of calcium with each bite.
- **Chai tea.** A warm drink is a supersoother, and curling up with a cup of aromatic decaf chai tea (Tazo makes ready-to-brew bags) can make the whole evil day go away.
- **Dark chocolate.** Okay, there's nothing in it that relieves stress, but when only chocolate will do, reach for the dark, sultry kind that's at least 70% cocoa. You figure if the antioxidant flavonoids in it are potent enough to fight cancer and heart disease, they've got to be able to temper tension's effects.

Article from *RealAge.com*

*To insure good health: eat lightly, breathe deeply, live moderately,
cultivate cheerfulness, and maintain an interest in life.*

-William Londen



Vitamin Enhanced, or Cost Enhanced?

VitaminWater. Propel. Aquafina. Dasani. The list goes on. Vitamin-enhanced waters are available in many flavor combinations and promise health benefits beyond rehydration. The problem is that their manufacturers' claims of increased endurance and energy aren't backed by science. In fact, these drinks may do more harm than good, particularly if you're trying to lose weight.

"But I like VitaminWater, and besides, it's better than drinking soda," you say. The 15 or so varieties of VitaminWater and the myriad flavors of Propel, Aquafina and other brands certainly taste great. They usually taste better than plain water. There's a reason for that: sugar.

There are about 13 grams of sugar per serving of VitaminWater. A 20-ounce bottle of VitaminWater, though, contains about 2 1/2 servings. So 13 grams of sugar can quickly turn into more than 30 grams.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) advises people who eat a 2,000-calorie diet to consume no more than 10 teaspoons or 44 grams of added sugar per day. So, a regular Coke, with its 39 grams of sugar, almost meets the daily limit of sugar. VitaminWater isn't too far behind Coke in terms of its sugar content.

VitaminWater contains a form of sugar called crystalline fructose, which is really just an iteration of high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS), a refined sugar that turns into fat when it's not used by the body. Most vitamin-enhanced waters contain very small amounts of vitamins -- less than what you'd get in a typical multivitamin, according to Adam Perlman, M.D., M.P.H., executive director of the Institute for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (ICAM) at the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey. It's better to get calories and vitamins from the foods you eat, Perlman says, than to rely on a drink to provide them.

But if you're doing an hour or more of exercise, sports drinks like vitamin-enhanced water or Gatorade are fine. If you consume these drinks while exercising, you're probably not going to gain weight from them. But if you drink one with dinner, you're just increasing your caloric intake. If your vitamin-enhanced water contains more than 60 calories per serving, it's not as effective for hydration, Ayoub says. Instead, he recommends drinking a 4-ounce glass of fruit juice to rehydrate. Unlike vitamin-enhanced waters, fruit juice contains antioxidants and minerals from a natural source.

Some vitamin-enhanced waters contain forms of caffeine like the amino acid taurine or the plant guarana. VitaminWater's Dragonfruit, for example, boasts that its taurine content is an energy booster. There's a lot of hype and not enough research on taurine to support the claims of its health benefits, according to Perlman. Fortunately, there's not enough taurine in these drinks to be harmful either, he says.

Are they worth the money? In a word, no.

"There are plusses and minuses to everything, depending on your goals," Perlman says.

So, if weight loss is your goal, don't drink these vitamin-enhanced waters. If your goal is balancing your budget, they aren't recommended for that either.

By Laurie Morrissey

Content provided by Revolution Health Group

Super Food of The Month: Garbanzo Beans

Garbanzo beans (also known as chickpeas) have a delicious nutlike taste and buttery texture. They provide a good source of protein that can be enjoyed year-round and are available either dried or canned.



Garbanzos are a good source of cholesterol-lowering fiber, as are most other beans. In addition to lowering cholesterol, garbanzos' high fiber content prevents blood sugar levels from rising too rapidly after a meal, making these beans an especially good choice for individuals with diabetes, insulin resistance or hypoglycemia. When combined with whole grains such as rice, garbanzos provide virtually fat-free high quality protein. But this is far from all garbanzos have to offer. Garbanzos are an excellent source of the trace mineral, molybdenum, an integral component of the enzyme sulfite oxidase, which is responsible for detoxifying sulfites. Sulfites are a type of preservative commonly added to prepared foods like delicatessen salads and salad bars.

Recipe of the Month: Homemade Hummus



Try hummus on your veggies, sandwiches or just by itself! What a great easy & healthy treat!

Canned chickpeas, drained 1 15-1/2-ounce can

Vegetable oil 2 tablespoons

Lemon juice 1 tablespoon

Onions, chopped 2 tablespoons

Salt 1/2 teaspoon

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES

1. Mash chickpeas in a small bowl until they are smooth.
2. Add oil and lemon juice; stir to combine.
3. Add chopped onions and salt.

PER SERVING:

Calories 90

Total fat 4 grams

Saturated fat 0

Cholesterol 0

Sodium 148 milligrams

Managed Care Wellness Website

Check out Managed Care's Wellness Website!

<http://www.cchs.net/wellness/managedcare.asp>

2009 Wellness Committee Join Our Team!

The Managed Care Wellness Committee is looking for additional members for 2009. If you're interested please email ortize@ccf.org.

Upcoming Managed Care Wellness Events

3rd Yoga session begins

October 6th, 2008 12:00-12:45pm

Wellness Lunch and Learn, Estay Greene, Herbal Supplements

October 7th, 2008, 12:00-1:00pm

Wellness Lunch and Learn, Dr. Tesar, Seasonal Affective Disorder

October 20th, 2008, 12:00-1:00pm