



Your Health Matters

***CCMHG – Your Town, County, District, Authority
Working together for your health***

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*Volume 19
August 2015*

Back-to-School Season Safety: The Dangers of Texting and Driving

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This is the time of year when students across the country are getting ready to head back to class. Some older teens will be driving to and from school, making this a perfect time to review the study about distracted driving and cellphones that the National Safety Council created in partnership with Nationwide.



The NSC compiled the information from the study into an [easy-to-read infographic](#) that shows how car crash fatalities caused by cell phone distractions are significantly underreported. Thousands of high school students will be added to the traffic mix during peak travel times when class is back in session, so it is a good idea to review this information with any teen drivers in your home:

- **As many as 1 in 4 accidents are caused by cell-phone distraction**
- **The average cost of a car accident is \$10,000**
- **Drivers using a cell phone are 4X more likely to get into a car accident**

Cell phones can do a lot more than they used to – call, text, tweet, check Facebook, and find the nearest gas station – which makes the temptation to use them behind the wheel greater than ever. Don't just talk to your teen about the dangers of cell phone distracted driving – consider taking other actions as well like using one of the many smartphone apps available that can limit phone use while a car is in motion.



Cell phone distracted driving is a safety problem that affects everyone, not just teens. To learn more about texting while driving, and the NSC study, check out our other [cell phone distracted driving blog](#) posts.

Source: [Nationwide](#)



Eating Right for Your Dental Health

What we eat is significant to our overall health. General guidelines should include balance and moderation and should involve choices from the five major food groups.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Dairy (milk, yogurt, cheese) | 4. Vegetables |
| 2. Meat (poultry, fish) | 5. Whole grains (breads, cereals) |
| 3. Fruits | |

Depending on your lifestyle, vitamin and mineral supplements may be necessary and, if snacking is necessary, substitute foods that most people like but that don't promote tooth decay. A major cause of cavities is the breakdown of refined sugars by bacteria, turning the sugars to acid, which then dissolves the tooth enamel. That's why plaque (a sticky mixture of bacteria, food, and debris) removal is so important. Studies have shown that the nature and frequency of sugar intake is more important than the amount. If the sugary food is very sticky, like caramel, gummy bears, or jam, it will remain on the teeth for a longer period of time. If you or your children are constantly snacking on sugary foods or sipping soda pop, you should be aware that your teeth are under continuous acid attack.

How can you prevent this problem? Avoid having sugar in the mouth for long periods of time. Stay away from sucking candies and chewing gum containing sugar and refrain from drinking soft drinks regularly (unless sugar-free). Try to cut down on the number of snacks per day. If snacking is necessary, substitute foods that most people like but that don't promote tooth decay. Examples are popcorn, pretzels, fruits, nuts, cheese, and vegetables.

Consuming sugary foods with a meal or for dessert has a less detrimental effect, because increased saliva flow during meals helps to wash the food away. Also, most people brush their teeth after meals. Keeping this in mind, it is better for children to eat sweets at a time and place that allows them to brush soon afterwards.

A balanced diet is also important to keep bones and gums healthy. Foods rich in vitamin C (citrus fruits and juices, leafy vegetable, potatoes), vitamin B12 (dairy, meat) and folic acid (spinach, broccoli) will help strengthen gums and supporting soft tissue. Of course calcium from dairy foods and dark green leafy vegetables are important too as they are necessary for the development and maintenance of strong teeth and bones. For those who are lactose intolerant, calcium supplements are readily available.



\$150 FITNESS BENEFIT REMINDER

You are eligible to receive \$150 per family per year for being a member in a qualified fitness center or gym.



BCBS: Simply send us the [Completed Fitness Benefit Form](#). A copy of your health club agreement or contract that includes the name and address of the health club and the membership or class dates, 8.5" x 11" photocopies of dated, paid receipts, or your bank or credit card statements, or paycheck stub if your club fees are automatically deducted from those accounts. Receipts or statements should include the name of the family member enrolled in the club and the individual charges for a full four months of health club membership or class fees. Finally, mail the form and copies of your health club contract and paid receipts or statements to the address at the bottom of the attached claim form. If you have any questions, please call the Member Service number on your ID card.

HPHC: You have two options for submitting your fitness reimbursement:

1) Online reimbursement: (takes about two weeks to process) you will need an HPHConnectaccount to complete your online fitness reimbursement form. Visit www.harvardpilgrim.org/fitnessreimbursement and click on the appropriate HPHConnectlink. Once you're logged into your HPHConnectaccount, fill out the appropriate form. As long as all requirements are met, your reimbursement should arrive in the mail in about two weeks.

2) Paper reimbursement: which takes up to eight weeks if you don't have Internet access, or would rather not submit your reimbursement electronically, you can use our paper form. You can access a form at www.harvardpilgrim.org/fitnessreimbursement or call Member Services at (888) 333-4742 and a representative will send you a form. Please allow 6–8 weeks for processing.

FREE Diabetes Medications/Supplies!



Take Charge of your Diabetes!

Sponsored by the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group (CCMHG)

We offer a simple diabetes management program that allows you to receive covered diabetes medications and supplies with \$0 co-pays/co-insurance – that means NO cost to you! Participation is **FREE** and absolutely **confidential** and voluntary.

To find out more, register on the *Good Health Gateway* website developed specifically for you at: www.GoodHealthGateway.com or call our HelpLine Advocates at 800-643-8028.

Here's what one CCMHG member recently said about the program:

"You must have heard from many people what a life saver you are keeping this program going. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate it and you should know that it has helped to lower my A1C level, triglyceride level, I lost 25 lbs. and it is an incentive not a crutch. Not worrying about the cost of the meds, needles, etc. is a stress reliever in itself and stress is a major cause of my type 2. Thank you many times over." – M.A.

FREE Brand Name Medications!



Sponsored by the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group (CCMHG)

Learn to use medications safely and effectively!
Get the most out of your pharmacy benefit!
Save money on your prescription medications!
Improve communications with your health provider!

Visit www.myMedicationAdvisor.com
or call our *myMedicationAdvisor*® HelpLine Advocates at 877-467-3113.

Wellness News

Couch to 5k Running Program

We had some alumni and newbies that ran the Cultural Center Race in June. Our next program just began on August 11th at the Stony Brook Elementary School in Brewster!! We meet every Tuesday/Thursday at 4:45pm. We are at our minimum capacity and if you would like to join us please contact me as soon as possible (as week one is already completed) at capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com or 508-631-7263.



As with all physical fitness programs: You must discuss this program with your doctor prior to start!

We are also set for a Reunion Run of all our C25k alumni on Friday, September 18th 5pm at Marathon Sports in Yarmouth. We will be walking to Peter Homer Park and then running 3.1 miles around the park and back to Marathon where will be able to shop at 20% discount (on everything except gadgets) and enjoy some food and beverages! This is an RSVP event so you must notify me if you plan to attend. Please note that if you have fallen off the running wagon – walking is welcome too or a combination of both!!! Hope to see you there!

Biometric Screenings

We are gearing up for another successful year of screenings and I am already booking dates! I have a limited number I can schedule and the program is first come, first serve so if you would like to see us come to your town/district/school contact me as soon as you can! If you have not done this before, maybe this is the year!

Our list of services includes blood pressure; pulse; weight; waist measurement; Body mass index; cholesterol (hdl & total – non-fasting test); glucose; UV skin damage assessment; and hearing screenings. Contact me at capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com or 508-631-7263 to schedule your event!



Kick Butts Program

Our next program will begin on September 30th at Cape Cod Regional Technical High School in Harwich! It will run for 6 consecutive weeks from 5pm-6:30pm in the schools Conference Room. Participants will continue to meet once/month for following year. This incredible program covers all your nicotine replacement therapy and pays you to remain smoke free – up to \$500 annually! Not to mention the health benefits you will gain from taking part! Please do this for yourself! Contact Deanna at capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com or 508-631-7263 ASAP! This is the single best step you can take to better your health! Note: **You do not need to be smoke free to begin this program!**

Spring Walking Challenge

We had a great time this year with our challenge and our prizes and winners were:

Polar Heart Rate Monitors (H7 Bluetooth): Cathy Fryxell Town of Chatham

Polar Heart Rate Monitors (H7 Bluetooth): Susan Leven Town of Brewster

Garmin Vivofit Fitness Band: Jane Zulkiewicz Town of Barnstable

Garmin Vivofit Fitness Band: Julie Lariviere Barnstable Schools

iPod Shuffle: Arozana Davis Town of Truro

iPod Shuffle: Heidi Anderson-Walsh Town of Sandwich

iPod Shuffle: Laurel Visceglia Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District

iPod Shuffle: Jacquelyn Varjian Town of Dennis



I am already working on next year's program and looking forward to having a smartphone enabled platform!! I hope to see lots more of you next spring!!!

Maintain Don't Gain Holiday Challenge

I am already working on our MDG Challenge! It will take place over the Thanksgiving to New Years bustling holiday season! I am really excited and am hoping that it will be even more successful than last year's program, which will be hard to beat. Remember this:

"I started the program with 328 members weighing in and ended the program with 238 members weighing out! The combined total weight for eligible participants was 37,495.3 pounds at weigh in and 37,165.4 at weigh out!! Participants lost 329.9 pounds in 6 weeks – that's an average of 55 pounds per week!" Deanna D.

Looking at those numbers was amazing as it was not a weight loss program! We will once again be conducting our weekly walks at the Hyannis Youth and Community Center and will be extending the walking hours to two full hours so we are able to accommodate more busy schedules. This way you have an even bigger window to drop in and walk with us!

Programs on Martha's Vineyard

For more information on MV programs contact Krystle Rose, MV Wellness Coordinator at krystlearose@gmail.com or (401) 623-6006 or www.ccmghmarthasvineyard.com

Hot Topics

Flu risks elevate importance of vaccinations

An estimated 5% to 20% of the nation's adult population will develop influenza each year, while more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, according to the CDC. An estimated 42% of the public generally gets a flu shot - a number that has remained steady over the past three to four years, but is considered insufficient. It drops substantially in the 18 to 50 population and especially in the 13 to 17 group. In fact, as many as 53% of young children and adolescents do not get flu vaccinations!

There's also a major perception problem among the public, which tends to view the flu as a relatively minor ailment when the CDC reports that "thousands of people in the United States die from the flu every year." One of the most common complications from the flu is pneumonia, a very serious medical condition.

"If you actually get the flu, you could miss 10 to 14 days," explains Rick Mohall, senior director of clinical services for Rite Aid Corporation. "It's that severe and serious before you start to feel better." Mohall says a significant number of flu-related absences among any given workforce can "tremendously diminish" productivity.

An interesting side note about the 2014-2015 flu season vaccination is that the CDC reported that "it was not a good match for the most common circulating strain of flu," according to Mohall. While that happens rarely, the flu shot can still be of value.

"Getting a flu shot still has the potential to lessen the severity of the flu, even if it's not a perfect match," he explains, noting that it can mean the difference between recovering from home or the hospital.
Source: EBN News

Cleaning Fruit - Chemical-free and EASY!



FARMER'S PAL

Fill sink with water, add 1 Cup of Vinegar, and Stir. Add all fruit, and Soak for 10 minutes. Water will be dirty, and fruit will sparkle with no wax, or dirty film. Great for Berries too, as it keeps them from molding. Do this with strawberries, and they last for weeks!

Yoga Pose of the Month: Upward Facing Dog

Start by lying face down on your mat, legs should be long with a feeling of extension through the length of the toes and spread hips-width apart. Bend your elbows and place your palms flat to the ground, fingers spread, hands completely plugged into the floor and have your fingertips alongside your chest. Your wrist joints should be parallel to the front edge of the mat, with your wrists and elbows at a 90-degree angle. Elbows should stay tight to your sides. From here, press down through the top of the feet; the top of all 10 toes should press into the floor. Press the palms down and gently lift your body off the floor. The ONLY parts of your body touching the ground should be the tops of the feet and the whole hand. Once your arms are fully extended, double-check that your wrist joint is still under your shoulder - aligning the wrist, elbow and shoulder joints together. (This positioning is critical and ensures a safe, less stressed lower back.) The most common mistake in this pose is having your hands too far out in front of you, creating tremendous low back pressure.



Food for thought

Give Your Gut a Health Boost



While our knowledge of the human microbiome is still far too limited to make specific dietary recommendations, the following suggestions may help to nourish a more complex gut environment by fueling beneficial bacteria:

1. *Eat a wide variety of high-fiber plant foods every single day, including vegetables, fruits, beans, lentils, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.*
2. *Incorporate prebiotic foods. So-called prebiotic foods are rich in the types of fiber that beneficial gut bacteria thrive on. Best bets include onions, garlic, leeks, shallots, asparagus, beets, cabbage, beans, lentils, soybeans, whole wheat, oats, and bananas.*
3. *Enjoy fermented foods. Fermented foods get their tang from lactic acid-producing bacteria, which can survive your harsh digestive tract and actually populate your gut, at least temporarily. While these foods aren't necessarily probiotics, they may help to support a healthy digestive system. Yogurt with live and active cultures is an easy source, but there are plenty of other deliciously funky options. Experiment with kefir (a fermented yogurt drink), kombucha tea, unpasteurized miso, tempeh (fermented soybean cake), and fermented vegetables with live cultures such as pickles, sauerkraut, and kimchi (look for these in the refrigerated section of your grocery store, since shelf-stable jars don't contain live bacteria).*

Long story short: Pile on the fiber and give the bugs on board in your gut something to chew on. For the full article and more information go to everydayHEALTH

Roasted Corn, Avocado & Tomato Salad

Adapted from Foodily.com

Ingredients:

- 1 pint grape tomatoes
- 1 ripe avocado
- 2 ears of fresh sweet corn
- 2 tbsp. fresh cilantro, chopped

Honey Lime Dressing

- Juice of 1 lime (approx. 3 tbsp.)
- 3 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp. honey
- Sea salt and fresh cracked pepper, to taste
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Dash of cayenne pepper



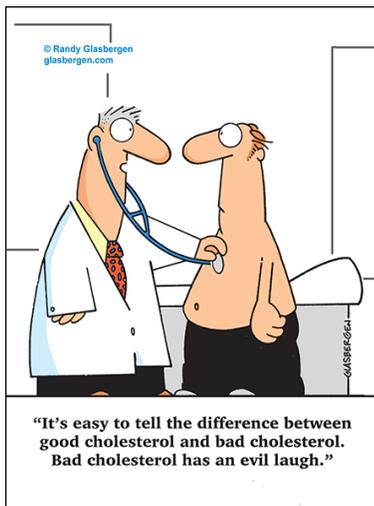
Remove husks from corn and grill over medium heat for 10 minutes. The corn should have some brown spots and be tender and not mushy. Cut the corn off the cob then scrape the cob with the back of your knife to get the juices. Set aside and let cool. Slice the tomatoes in half. Dice the avocado and chop the cilantro. Add all the dressing ingredients in a small bowl and whisk to combine. Set aside. Combine the sliced tomatoes, avocado, cilantro, grilled corn and dressing. Mix gently so everything is evenly coated. Be careful not to mash the avocados. Let the salad sit for 10-15 minutes to let flavors mingle.

Nutrition Facts: Serves 4: Per Serving: calories 85; Total Fat 3g; Monounsaturated Fat 2g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 47mg; Potassium 207mg; Carbohydrate 14g; Dietary Fiber 2g; Sugars 7g; Protein 2g;

What Is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is necessary for good health, but high cholesterol levels can increase your risk for heart disease. Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that's naturally produced in your body, primarily by your liver. It's in all the cells in your body and is essential to the production of hormones, vitamin D, and bile, which helps you digest your food. Cholesterol is packaged inside an envelope of lipids (fat), with specific proteins on the inside to make up particles called lipoproteins. Cholesterol is also found in foods, such as meat, dairy products, and eggs. When you eat too much of these foods, your liver produces more cholesterol.

The Last Word



Good Cholesterol vs. Bad Cholesterol

There are two type of cholesterol: “good” cholesterol, aka high-density lipoprotein (HDL), and “bad” cholesterol, known as low-density lipoprotein (LDL).

A high level of HDL may lower your risk of heart attack and stroke. HDL cholesterol helps your body remove LDL by carrying it from the bloodstream and artery walls to your liver, where it is broken down and excreted from the body.

LDL cholesterol, on the other hand, can cause more plaque to form in your arteries. This thick, hard deposit can clog arteries and makes them harder in a condition called atherosclerosis, which can lead to a greater risk of heart attack or stroke.

What Are Triglycerides?

Triglycerides are stored in your fat cells and, along with carbohydrates and protein, are an important energy source for your body. Too many triglycerides, however, increases your risk for coronary artery disease. Those who have heart disease, diabetes, a high cholesterol level, or are overweight are more likely to have higher levels of triglycerides.

Your Cholesterol Score

The amount of cholesterol you have in your body can be measured through a simple blood test, called a lipid profile or a lipid panel. It's recommended everyone have his or her cholesterol checked starting at age 20 and at least every five years after. Your total cholesterol score is made up of your LDL and HDL numbers, plus 20 percent of the amount of triglycerides in your blood.

What Causes High Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is measured in milligrams (mg) of cholesterol per deciliter (dL) of blood. Your cholesterol level is considered high if you have total cholesterol levels of 240 mg/dL or higher. It's considered borderline when it's between 200-239 mg/dL.

When your cholesterol is too high, plaque can develop on the walls of your arteries. This can make it difficult for your heart and brain to get all the blood they need. When your heart is deprived of blood, you may have a heart attack, and when your brain doesn't get enough, you may have a stroke.

High cholesterol (also called hypercholesterolemia) can be hereditary, but it's also affected by your lifestyle choices. Those with an unhealthy diet, who are overweight, and don't exercise are more likely to have high cholesterol. You're also more likely to have high cholesterol if you smoke or drink heavily.

How Diet Affects Cholesterol

What you eat has a direct link to how high or low your cholesterol levels are. To lower your cholesterol levels, it's important to:

- Avoid foods high in dietary cholesterol. These include high-fat dairy products, processed foods, and meats, including beef, pork, lamb, skin-on poultry, and organ meats.
- Eat more fiber. Whole grains, fruits, and vegetables can help lower your cholesterol levels.

Trade unhealthy fats for healthier ones. Limit the amount of trans fats and saturated fats in your diet. These are most often found in packaged foods, fast foods, butter, palm and coconut oils, and full-fat dairy (e.g., whole milk). Instead, opt for monounsaturated fats found in olive, peanut, and canola oils and nuts. *Source: [everydayHealth](#)*



everyday HEALTH

Cancer Screening Guidelines

Cancer	Test	Age	Usual Frequency	USPSTF Level
Colorectal	Colonoscopy	50–75 45–75 for African-Americans (ACG)	Every 10 years	A STRONGLY RECOMMENDED
	Sigmoidoscopy (an alternative to colonoscopy)	50–75 45–75 for African-Americans (ACG)	Every 5 years	A STRONGLY RECOMMENDED
	Fecal occult blood test (an alternative to colonoscopy)	50–75 45–75 for African-Americans (ACG)	Annually	A STRONGLY RECOMMENDED
Breast	Mammogram	40–49 (ACS, ACOG, ACR)	Annually	C UNCERTAIN
	Mammogram	50–74	Every 1–2 years	B RECOMMENDED
Cervical	Pap smear alone or Pap smear with HPV test	21–65	Every 3 years if just Pap smear is done Every 5 years if both Pap smear and HPV test are done	A STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

Sources:
ACG: American College of Gastroenterology
ACOG: American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology
ACR: American College of Radiology
ACS: American Cancer Society
USPSTF: U.S. Preventive Services Task Force

CCMHG Incentive Program

Be on the lookout for postcards coming in the next few weeks! Make regular preventive health screenings a priority in your life and earn an incentive. CCMHG subscribers and spouses can earn an incentive for completing the appropriate, recommended preventive screenings:

- **Health Screening:** Subscribers and spouses who have a cholesterol and blood pressure screening at their doctor's office will be eligible for a chance to win one of 300 \$50 American Express Gift Cheques.
- **Mammogram:** Women subscribers and spouses age 40 and over (or recommended by a physician) who have a mammogram will receive a \$25 American Express Gift Cheque.
- **Colonoscopy:** Subscribers and spouses age 50 and over (or recommended by a physician) who have a colonoscopy will receive a \$50 American Express Gift Cheque.

Your participation in the incentive program is completely confidential. Your employer will not be notified if you do or do not participate.

Your Health Matters is a quarterly publication for municipal employees and family members of the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group. All questions and correspondence should be directed to Deanna L. Desroches, Health & Wellness Consultant, Cape Cod Healthy Connections, LLC capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com or 508-631-7263.