



# ***Your Health Matters***

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

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## ***Outdoor Exercise Can Boost the Body, Mind, and Mood***

There is no debating the health benefits of physical fitness. Getting regular exercise helps prevent heart disease and other chronic illness, improves mood, reduces stress, improves sleep, and more. For adults to reap those benefits, the CDC recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity each week.

That time commitment may seem like a tall order in your busy life. But the good news is that you don't have to book sessions in a gym to get in shape. Outdoor exercises are just as effective as indoor ones, can be more fun, and have some other appealing advantages.

Outdoor fitness can be a structured exercise program that takes advantage of natural terrain to get you in shape, or it can be as simple as a brisk walk around the block. Outdoor fitness comes in many forms: Light gardening or other yard work, for example, is considered moderate physical activity, and a 154-pound man can burn around 330 calories in an hour doing it, according to the USDA.

When you're active outdoors — whether you're running on the beach or hiking up a mountain — your body is encountering a constantly changing environment. To keep up the activity at a consistent pace, you need to adapt to all those minute changes in your surroundings (such as slight inclines, bumps, or obstacles you may need to dodge), which means your body works harder than if you were running on a treadmill or using a stair machine, according to the American Council on Exercise.

Outdoor exercise is a way to get your vitamin D through sunlight. This is especially important if you are overweight as research suggests that people who are overweight are more likely to be deficient in vitamin D.

When you exercise outdoors, your mind is aware of the changing terrain. Whether you use the hills, the sand on a beach, or a winding path, your mind has to focus differently than it would on a flat gym floor and research suggests the effect of exercise on the mind tends to favor a positive direction. Several studies suggest exercise outdoors benefited mental well-being more than the same type of exercise inside.

Exercise early. People can always find more excuses to avoid exercising outdoors at the end of the day. In the morning your energy is higher, the air is generally cleaner, the temperature tends to be lower, and you'll get to feel the post-workout benefits (less stress and a better mood) all day long.

Why would you need bottled aromatherapy when you can go outside and smell nature? Outside exercise uses all your senses and connects your body and mind. It can be a life-changing experience. Follow this link for the full article at [EVERYDAYHEALTH](http://EVERYDAYHEALTH)

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## *Dentists can help fight opioid epidemic*

The opioid epidemic in America is costing tens of thousands of lives and billions of dollars. Massachusetts is no exception. The epidemic is fueled by prescriptions and, in many cases, drug diversion—when prescriptions are obtained or used illegally. Opioids may be prescribed after dental surgery, but what happens to the unused, leftover pills? Are they targets for diversion?

A recent study examined how many opioid pills are actually left over after dental surgery and the effectiveness of a program that encourages people to appropriately dispose of them. The American Dental Association reports that one of the main hypotheses tested was whether people who received information about properly disposing of their opioids would be more likely to do so. The information patients received also contained a brief description of the risks of keeping unused opioid analgesics and information regarding a hotline that would provide direction for appropriate drug disposal.

Researchers found a 22% increase in the proportion of patients who either disposed of or reported intent to dispose of unused opioids. They also found that patients received an average of 28 pills per prescription and had 15 pills (54%) left over. Even though they had a small sample size, the researchers concluded that dentists and oral surgeons could substantially reduce the amount of prescription opioids for diversion.

Dentists in Massachusetts must now also participate in the state's prescription monitoring program. In October, the state passed a law requiring prescribers to search the online program before issuing a prescription for certain drugs, including opioids. According to the report, doctors, dentists, mid-level practitioners and pharmacists who sign into MassPAT (Massachusetts Prescription Awareness Tool) and enter a patient's name and birthdate receive a year's worth of clinical information, showing the drugs prescribed and information on the prescriber and pharmacy. MassPAT is also interoperable with prescription monitoring programs in other states, so prescribers in Massachusetts can see medical information even if the patient received that care elsewhere. This new requirement is just one piece of a comprehensive approach the state is taking to fight the opioid epidemic.



**Harvard Pilgrim Members:** Personal Health Coaching Support: Our personal health coaches can help you set and achieve health improvement goals. Members ages 18 and older can choose to receive personalized support by phone from a personal health coach, who can work with you on: Smoking cessation; Stress reduction and life balance; lowering cholesterol; Dealing with back pain; Blood pressure control; Weight management; Exercise; and Nutrition. [Login today to check out this great benefit!](#)

**Blue Cross Members:** Free Hearing Screening and Hearing Aids Starting at \$995: Members receive a complimentary hearing screening and discounted prices on hearing aids - as low as \$995.00! And remember, your Beltone hearing aids come with BelCare Lifetime Care™ at all participating Beltone locations; FREE three-year supply of batteries (48 cells per year per aid); Three year warranty that covers lost, stolen, or damaged hearing aids (subject to a deductible of up to \$400); 45-day money-back guarantee (re-stocking fee may apply); Program applies to immediate family members; and No annual membership fees to qualify for discounts. [Login today to check out this great benefit!](#)

# Wellness News

## Couch to 5k Running Program

Our new program started in Hyannis on August 14<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to join it's not too late but contact me ASAP at [capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com](mailto:capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com). We will be in the third week and you would not want to start any later than this! We meet on Tuesday and Thursday at the School Administration Building, 230 South Street at 4:45pm. The completion of this program without missing more than one class will earn our members → **35 points for our wellness portal!**

## Spring Walking Challenge

Our SWC was a great success again this year. Members recorded their steps on the Wellness Portal (some linking their Fitbit so they didn't even need to log them in - they were automatically uploaded!!) and those that completed the challenge received → **25 points for our wellness portal!** We had several happy members that received the following prizes:

- ❖ *Kathleen Norton-Cannavo, Town of Sandwich won two Red Sox Tickets*
- ❖ *Wendy Yelle, Barnstable Schools won One Month Unlimited Yoga at the Yoga Center of CC*
- ❖ *Anne-Marie Williams, Mashpee Schools won a \$100 gift certificate to Marathon Sports*
- ❖ *Sarah Eaton, Town of Orleans won a \$25 visa gift card*
- ❖ *Theresa Cook, Town of Mashpee won a \$25 visa gift card*
- ❖ *Carol Coppola, Town of Harwich won a \$25 visa gift card*
- ❖ *Jayanne Sci, Town of Brewster won a \$25 visa gift card*

## Wellness Portal

It's never too late to register on our Wellness Portal. We just rolled out the new fiscal year program and if you login and complete a Health Risk Assessment before August 30<sup>th</sup> you will receive → **25 points** and a \$25 gift card in the mail!!! Remember your goal is to earn 100 points during the fiscal year. If you reach that goal you will receive a \$35 gift card and have the chance of winning \$200! Four members are randomly selected. This year these lucky members received the gift cards (and to be sure you are reading this correctly they received a total of \$235!):

- ❖ *Carol Coppola, Town of Harwich*
- ❖ *Linda Kiley, Town of Sandwich*
- ❖ *Leanne Gray, Mashpee Water District*
- ❖ *Niki Kellett, Barnstable County*



## Biometric Screenings

If you want us to visit your worksite this upcoming fiscal year, it is never too early to schedule a date with me! Please contact me directly at [capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com](mailto:capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com) to schedule your screening today!

## Walking Programs

Beginning September 4<sup>th</sup> we will be walking on Tuesday and Thursday mornings in Yarmouth at Peter Homer Park from 9am – 10am. All members are welcome. If you are on 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> shift, a spouse or retiree, or if it's your day off please join us! We cover between 2-3 miles depending on your pace. You must [REGISTER](#) for this program. Attending this 8 week series will earn you → **35 points for our wellness portal!**



## Stress and Nutrition Education

Beginning October 2<sup>nd</sup> our 5-week nutrition education program titled “Good Intentions” will be held at Sand Hill Community Center in Sandwich from 4:45pm – 5:45pm. If you are looking towards a healthier lifestyle and making nutritionally sound goals please join us. You must [REGISTER](#) for this program. Space is limited and it's filling up fast! Attending this program will earn you → **30 points for our wellness portal!**

Also beginning on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Cape Light Compact office in Yarmouth is a beginner-intermediate Yoga Class. In the gentle, guided yoga practice we will move mindfully through hatha yoga poses, using our breath, to awaken energy and vitality while building strength, endurance and body awareness. This 5 week class will take place from 5pm - 6pm. There is a \$25 fee which will be collected on the first evening of this class. If you would like to attend please [REGISTER](#). This class will fill up fast! Dress comfortably and most importantly be on time to not disrupt others.



## Holiday Challenge!

Back again this year by popular demand is our “maintain” program! All you have to do is stay within two pounds of your weigh-in weight over the holiday season and you will be a winner! If you attain this goal you will be entered into a random prize drawing AND receive 25 points on our Wellness Portal! Historically we have been very successful at not only maintaining but actually losing weight! That's amazing!

We will begin weigh-ins around the first of November! If you cannot make one of the designated dates there will be a last-chance date on **November 20<sup>th</sup> at the Hyannis Youth and Community Center (HYCC) on Basset Road in Hyannis from 4:30pm - 6:00pm. This is the last opportunity to participate!**

The HYCC is also providing us access to their beautiful indoor track on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 4:30pm – 6:30pm to walk and/or run free of charge to CCMHG members although memberships to the facility are only \$20 for Barnstable residents and \$40 for non-residents. It's a nice spot to walk on a cold dark night!! If you are going to join us please register at [signup.com](http://signup.com)!

Please remember this program is open to family members covered under your health insurance too! The successful completion of this program will earn you → **25 points for our member wellness portal!**

# Hot Topics

## ***Inherited high cholesterol often goes untreated***

About four in 1,000 adults in this country are born with a genetic condition marked by abnormally high cholesterol levels, known as familial hypercholesterolemia (FH). Their "bad" LDL cholesterol can be two to three times as high as the common target LDL value of 100 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or lower for healthy people. But only about half of people with FH are getting proper treatment for the disease, according to a report in the May 22 issue of *Circulation*.

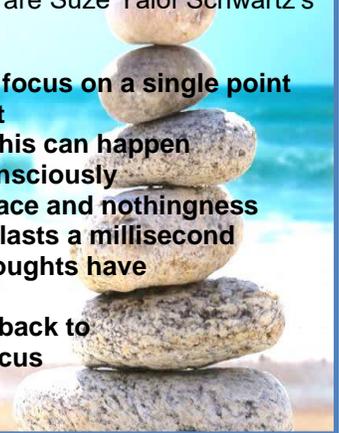
For the study, researchers analyzed health surveys done between 1999 and 2014 with nearly 42,500 adults in the United States. Although more than 80% of people with FH or severely high cholesterol were aware of their condition, only half were taking cholesterol-lowering statins. And among those who were, only one-third were taking optimal doses of the drugs.

If untreated, a person with FH has at least 13 times the risk of a heart attack compared with someone without FH. Anyone with an LDL cholesterol level of 190 mg/dL or higher should be screened for FH and treated appropriately. More information is available from the [FH Foundation](#) which aims to boost awareness and improve the diagnosis and treatment of FH.

## ***Make Time for Meditation***

A daily practice of even just 60 seconds can take you from crazed to calm. Here are Suze Yalof Schwartz's tips on getting started:

- ❖ **Close your eyes and focus on a single point or visualize an object**
- ❖ **Let your focus go – this can happen consciously or unconsciously**
- ❖ **Drift in the gap of peace and nothingness that arises, even if it lasts a millisecond**
- ❖ **Notice when your thoughts have snuck back in**
- ❖ **Bring your attention back to the single point of focus**
- ❖ **Repeat**



## ***Back to School Flu Shot!! Make it a Priority!!***

*Influenza causes more hospitalizations among young children than any other vaccine-preventable disease. The single best way to protect against seasonal flu and its potential severe complications is for children to get a seasonal influenza vaccine each year. Flu vaccination is recommended for all children aged 6 months and older. Making healthy choices at school and at home can help prevent the flu and spreading flu to others.*

Source: [Center for Disease Control](#)

***Can Apple Cider Vinegar Fix All Your Problems?*** *Unpasteurized apple cider vinegar is rich in enzymes and probiotics. Probiotics aid digestion, keep us "regular" and prevent bloating but those benefits only are gained if you ingest the raw stuff sold by all-natural producers because pasteurization kills probiotic strains. Raw apple cider vinegar also contains acetic acid, which research shows can help block starch absorption. This can directly benefit pre-diabetics because blood sugar may be less likely to spike if you consume vinegar before a starchy meal.*

*A related claim is that vinegar "increases energy levels" by stopping blood sugar spikes but for the general population this is a bit of an exaggeration. Scientific evidence shows only a very slight beneficial effect on non-pre-diabetic subjects. Likewise, studies have shown ingesting apple cider vinegar helped protect mice from the ill effects of high-fat diets by improving blood-sugar levels and cholesterol. Unfortunately, replicating these results in humans has been elusive.*

*The claim that apple cider vinegar cleanses the liver of "sludge" or toxins is more anecdotal than scientific. Similarly, the notion that apple cider vinegar can melt fat or promote weight loss isn't backed by hard facts. It's certainly plausible that adding a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar to 8 ounces of water can suppress appetite — but one study concluded this resulted mainly from nausea caused by consuming highly acidic vinegar. (It's also worth noting that drinking 8 ounces of plain water before a meal can dull appetite as well, with zero vinegar added.)*

*Does this mean you should start guzzling? Probably not. Most health experts caution against overdoing it with apple cider vinegar, since it has the potential to negatively affect tooth enamel and irritate your stomach lining. In small doses, however, it might be well worth integrating into any healthy lifestyle. Source: [MyFitnessPal blog](#)*

## Food for thought

### Another Reason to Pour a Second Cup

For many folks who need an extra kick start in the morning, coffee is primarily a caffeine-delivery system. But a little burst of energy isn't the only thing you're getting from a cup of Joe.



"The majority of the data says that moderate coffee drinking shows health benefits," said Rachel Songer, a registered dietitian nutritionist who works as a clinical dietitian at Cape Cod Hospital. "Moderate" coffee drinking is defined as three to five 8-ounce cups of coffee per day, or less than 400 milligrams of caffeine per day. "There is data that shows that caffeinated coffee can improve blood flow," she said. "There's also data that shows both caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee have health benefits."

There must be a little bit of magic in those beans. People who drink three cups a day showed an 18 percent lower risk of death from heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and respiratory and kidney disease over the course of a 16-year test period, according to a study published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*. Even one cup a day decreased the death risk by 12 percent. "This study is the largest of its kind and includes minorities who have very different lifestyles," said Veronica W. Setiawan, PhD, lead author of the study. "Seeing a similar pattern across different populations gives stronger biological backing to the argument that coffee is good for you whether you are white, African-American, Latino or Asian." "The Framingham Heart Study shows that coffee is associated with a reduced risk of heart failure and stroke," she said. "It's also been found to be associated with a reduced risk of Type 2 diabetes, and there is some evidence showing a protective association between caffeine and Parkinson's disease."

People who take their coffee black get the most benefit. "If you add a lot of high-fat dairy products or dairy substitutes or sugar, that's not very heart healthy, especially if you drink a lot of coffee throughout the day," she said. She recommends using a low-fat milk, instead of cream, which is high in saturated fats. "Added sugar is supposed to be less than 10 percent of your total calorie needs," she said. "Stevia would be a better choice since it's plant-based, rather than an artificially made sweetener." If you're not used to drinking coffee black, it might be worth giving it a try, Songer said, perhaps by going in stages from two splashes of cream to one, to just a tiny bit, to none.

The exact reasons for the health benefits of coffee are still a mystery. "We cannot say drinking coffee will prolong your life, but we see an association," said Setiawan. "If you like to drink coffee, drink up! If you're not a coffee drinker, then you need to consider if you should start."

#### **Salsa Turkey Tortilla Wraps**

Adapted from [Savory](#)

##### Ingredients:

- 1 tbs olive oil
- 16 oz 94% Fat Free Ground Turkey
- 2 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 cup fresh corn kernels
- 1 ½ cups salsa
- 1 small romaine heart
- 8 (6-inch) whole wheat tortillas
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese



Directions: In a 12-inch skillet, heat the oil on medium. Add the turkey, chili powder, garlic powder, and cumin. Cook 6 min., breaking up meat with back of a spoon. Add the corn and salsa. Cook 3–5 min., stirring occasionally. Thinly slice the romaine. Serve turkey mixture in the tortillas, topped with the cheese and romaine. Nutritional Information: Serves 4: Per Serving: Calories 526; Total fat 20g; Saturated fat 6g; Monounsaturated fat 3g; Cholesterol 75mg; Sodium 1370mg; Carbohydrate 45g; Fiber 8g; Protein 39g; Sugars 9g. Bonus: Vitamin A: 55%, Calcium 57%

## 6 Unusual Signs of Dehydration You Should Know About

Dehydration occurs when the body has insufficient water to function properly. While mild dehydration may be just uncomfortable, more severe dehydration can lead to blood clots, seizures, and other potentially fatal complications.

Clearly, severe dehydration must be treated promptly, but even mild dehydration can have adverse effects on mood and energy. It's important to catch any degree of dehydration early, but the signs of dehydration aren't always obvious ones like thirst and fatigue. Here are six surprising signs and symptoms of dehydration.



### *The Last Word*

- 1. Bad Breath:** Saliva has antibacterial properties, but dehydration can prevent your body from making enough saliva. "If you're not producing enough saliva, you can get bacteria overgrowth in the mouth, and one of the side effects of that is bad breath," says John Higgins, MD, an associate professor of cardiovascular medicine at the University of Texas in Houston and the chief of cardiology at Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital in Houston.
- 2. Dry Skin:** "A lot of people think that people who get dehydrated are really sweaty, but in fact, as you go through various stages of dehydration, you get very dry skin," Dr. Higgins says, adding that skin may appear flushed as well. When pinched, the skin of a dehydrated person may remain "tenting" and take some time to return to its normal, flat appearance.
- 3. Muscle Cramps:** Dehydration is only one potential cause of muscle cramps, but it's one worth considering if you get cramps while exercising, particularly in hot weather. "The hotter you get, the more likely you are to get muscle cramps, and that's from a pure heat effect on the muscles. As the muscles work harder and harder, they can seize up from the heat itself. Changes in the electrolytes, such as sodium and potassium, can lead to muscle cramping as well," says Higgins. Even in cooler weather, dehydration is possible if you don't drink enough fluids while working out albeit symptoms may be milder or come on slower, but dehydration carries the same risks, regardless of the outside temperature.
- 4. Fever and Chills:** If your body is severely dehydrated you may experience fever and chills. Fever, in turn, can worsen dehydration, and the higher the fever, the more dehydrated you may become. In infants, so-called dehydration fever may develop if there is inadequate fluid intake, diarrhea, or vomiting. Any fever in an infant or toddler is cause for concern. Ask your pediatrician for guidelines on when to call for help. Adults with fever should seek medical help if their temperature reaches 103°F.
- 5. Food Cravings, Especially for Sweets:** "When you're dehydrated, it can be difficult for organs like the liver, which uses water, to release glycogen [stored glucose] and other components of your energy stores, so you can actually get cravings for food," Higgins says. While you can crave anything from chocolate to a salty snack, cravings for sweets are more common because your body may be experiencing difficulty breaking down glycogen to release glucose into the bloodstream to use as fuel. It's also not uncommon for the body to confuse the feeling of thirst with hunger, meaning that you may feel hungry when all you really need is water.
- 6. Headaches:** Even mild dehydration can cause a dehydration headache and even trigger a migraine headache. Since it's often not clear what is causing a headache, drinking a full glass of water and continuing to sip more fluids during the day is an easy way to ease your pain if, in fact, dehydration is contributing to it.

*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*  
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