



Your Health Matters

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

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Zero % increase!

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The Benefits of Walking for You and Your Family

"Walking is the best possible exercise," said Thomas Jefferson. Our third President believed at the turn of the 19th century what science confirms today—walking can improve physical and mental health. Walking is a healthy activity that can make us feel better and improve how we feel. In recent months, scientists have confirmed what many of us knew already—that these effects take place right away—often within 30 minutes. With that kind of discovery, it's time to get up and go for a walk!

What can walking do for you and your family? Walking can show your kids healthy ways to manage stress. Your kids likely can tell when you're feeling overwhelmed or tense. How you deal with those feelings sends them a powerful message. Here are just a few benefits of regular physical activity for growing children:

- Helps build and maintain healthy bones and muscles.
- Helps control weight, build lean muscle, and reduce fat.
- Reduces feelings of sadness, stress, and anxiety.
- Promotes positive mental health, including higher levels of self-esteem.
- Increases flexibility and aerobic endurance.

Walking and other physical activities can give your children a great foundation for a healthy life. Children who lead active lifestyles are likely to remain active as adults and pass on healthy lifestyle habits to their own children. Kids who exercise sleep better at night and can handle challenges more easily during the day—from carrying a heavy backpack to finding lost homework.

Walking together as a family provides a chance to connect with your child. When you go for a walk, you leave distractions like the TV and Internet at home, and you may find that this makes it easier to talk with your child. It also may be easier for some kids to open up as they walk. Just like it can be hard for you to start a conversation about certain topics, it can be hard for your child to tell you when something is bothering him. When you go for a walk, the change of scenery and the natural rhythm of exercise can help you both relax. You may find that you're better able to bring up tough topics and talk with your child without him feeling "put on the spot." When you're walking with your child, make sure you give each other your full attention! Don't let music devices or cell phones interrupt this special time.

Walking—whether you do it alone or with your children—can strengthen your family. You'll build your physical and mental health as well as your family bonds. Look for ways to make walking part of your family's routine. Instead of watching TV after dinner, put on your sneakers and step outside. If your child is up early, go for a morning walk. By walking together, you'll show your child how to manage stress, maintain physical health, and connect with the people you love. *Source: [WebMD](#)*



The Connection between Asthma and Oral Health

With viruses thriving in colder weather, more people will get sick with upper respiratory infections during winter. These respiratory infections can trigger asthma attacks, which surprisingly, may have an impact on your smile.

Inhaler: Depending on the inhaler used to stop attacks, those with asthma may experience oral health side effects. These can include bad breath, mouth ulcers and oral thrush. People with oral thrush could notice mouth lesions, redness or burning, soreness, slight bleeding and loss of taste. Another common concern of inhaler use is dry mouth. Over time, this can increase your risk of gum disease and tooth decay. Watch for any of these signs, and promptly speak to your dentist if you notice them.

If your inhaler is causing your mouth to feel dry, take these steps to remedy it before it damages your teeth:

- ❖ Use over-the-counter saliva replacements.
- ❖ Drink water more frequently.
- ❖ Chew sugar-free gum.
- ❖ Suck on sugar-free hard candy (don't bite down!).
- ❖ Avoid caffeine, alcohol and tobacco.
- ❖ Limit your sugar intake.
- ❖ Talk to your dentist about your dry mouth.

This season, take a deep breath and relax knowing you can protect your mouth even when your asthma acts up. Catching these oral health issues early and talking to your dentist can help keep your smile healthy any time of the year.



Excellent News:

At the January Board Meeting, the CCMHG Board voted to hold the rates for active employee health plans and dental plans at the current levels through FY2020, i.e. a 0% increase. REPEAT: ZERO PERCENT INCREASE!

The EyeMed premium will, by contract, remain the same as in FY19. The Delta Dental plans will become "Delta PPO Plus Premier" plans. Members who use the PPO dentists will experience somewhat lower out-of-pocket costs; however, no one will be required to change dentists.





Wear Red on February 1

Show your support on the day nationally-recognized to promote heart health!

Love Your Heart

Engage in 30 minutes of exercise at least 5 days a week, eat a diet low in salt & fat, and avoid smoking.



Take Action Now

More than 80% of those with diabetes develop some form of heart or blood vessel disease. Have a heart-to-heart with your doctor to find out how to lower your risk.

Know Your Risk

American Diabetes Association Alert Day[®] is March 26. Be in the know & take their risk test @ diabetes.org



If you or a loved one on your employer-sponsored health plan have pre-diabetes or diabetes, join the Diabetes Care Rewards Program to get support in managing your diabetes and rewards for meeting program requirements.



800.643.8028
GoodHealthGateway.com

Wellness News

Couch to 5k Running Program

Our next program begins on March 12th in Harwich. If you would like to join please [REGISTER](#) today. There is a \$20 fee to join and if you attend 17 out of the 18 sessions you will get the \$20 back! If you do not complete the program or attend all the sessions the money will be divided equally among the remaining members! We meet on Tuesday and Thursday at Harwich Town Hall, Main Street Harwich from 4:15pm – 5:00pm. UPDATE: This class is half full as of this printing. Upon successful completion you will earn → **35 points on our wellness portal!** If you have any questions contact me ASAP at capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com.

Wellness Portal

The time is ALWAYS RIGHT to register our Wellness Portal! Four member names were just randomly drawn for one of four \$200 gift cards! Our lucky winners are:

Jennifer Clarke, Harwich
Sarah Gorczyka, Mashpee
Sharon DiPrete, DYRSD
Jayanne Sci, Brewster



Remember your goal is to earn 100 points by June 30th. If you reach that goal you will receive a \$35 gift card and have the chance of winning our next raffle for 1 of 4 \$200 gift cards!

Biometric Screenings

We are super busy getting ready for Health Fair Season. We just booked the Falmouth, Harwich/Monomoy/Chatham and Nauset/Brewster/Orleans/Eastham fairs! Check with your employer for dates and location. We will also be visiting Mashpee and Sandwich for biometric screenings! If you would like my team to visit your worksite this fiscal year, contact me ASAP as dates are filling fast! Please contact me directly at capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com to schedule your screening today! Attendance at the screenings will earn you → **25 points for our wellness portal!**

Walking Programs

Beginning April 23rd we will be walking on Tuesday and Thursday mornings in Yarmouth. We will meet at 9am at Peter Homer Park, Old Town House Road, South Yarmouth and walk for one hour. Everyone is welcome to join regardless of age or pace! [REGISTER](#) for this program. Attending this 8 week series without missing more than one class will earn you → **35 points for our wellness portal!** If you would like to host a walk in your town please contact me today!



Maintain Don't Gain Holiday Challenge

Our program wrapped up nicely where we had a 70% retention rate for our program and of that 80% of the members were successful at "maintaining" their weight over the Holidays! Once again this year this group managed to somehow LOSE weight over the Holidays: a whopping 191 pounds to be exact! Congratulations to all that participated!!

Spring Steps Challenge

Our challenge takes place from April 8th to May 20th! To successfully complete this challenge you will need to log **294,000** steps within the six weeks of the challenge. That is an average of 7,000 steps a day, using a pedometer, Fitbit® or other device to keep track of steps. Steps must be entered into ahealthyme wellness portal, either on the website, through the HealthyNow app, or through a connected Fitbit® device, to be counted toward the challenge goal. The successful completion of this program will earn you → **25 points for our member wellness portal!**

Brand New Monthly Challenges!!

Beginning this past January we began hosting social media based challenges ([Facebook](#) closed groups). These challenges will be open to all CCMHG Members and their families. This will allow ALL MEMBERS to join in on the fun! Each month will be a different challenge and will be body, mind and spirit based. The successful completion of each challenge could win you some prizes but will also earn you → **25 points for our member wellness portal!**

January Winter Warrior Challenge

During January we challenged you to run or walk OUTSIDE every day of the month for at least a mile! We had 30 participants that took part in that challenge and Margaret Song from the Cape Light Compact won a \$50 Marathon Sports Gift Certificate in addition to being awarded 25 wellness points!!



February Yoga Challenge

During February we are challenging members to completing at least 15 days of yoga training as well as attend one in person class. One lucky winner will be receiving a new yoga mat and towel as well as their 25 wellness points.

March Happiness Challenge

During March members will be tasked with completing a number of different “happiness” related tasks such as holding a door, complementing a co-worker, taking a quick “mind break” and walking for 10 minutes and so very many more! One lucky winner will be receiving a \$25 iTunes card!



April Finish Five Five-K's Challenge

During April members will be tasked with completing five 5k's (3.1 miles) during the month. Four or more walks or runs on your own and at least one more at a race or group run. One lucky winner will win Skullcandy Wireless Ear Buds and a set of 5 pound dumbbells!

May Nutrition Challenge

During May members will be tasked with eating healthy, sharing posts of recipes, healthy dinners, lunches, etc. throughout the month. There will also be supermarket tours and Facebook live cooking demos. One lucky member will receive a Hydroflask water bottle!

ALL CHALLENGES ARE SOCIAL MEDIA BASED AND YOU MUST JOIN OUR CLOSED GROUPS: Each Challenge has its own closed group. You must also ask to join the Closed Facebook Group and to follow the requirement for each month's Challenge. It's a lot of fun to connect with other CCMHG members across the cape and islands and see what they are up to. You can be as vocal as you like or hang back in the shadows – the whole basis is for you to be part of the group.

Hot Topics

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

Teen dating violence can be physical, emotional, or sexual, and includes stalking. It can occur in person or electronically, which includes texting, social media, and other online applications. In a recent national survey 8% of high school students reported physical violence and 7% reported that they experienced sexual violence from a dating partner in the 12 months before the survey. Victims of teen dating violence are more likely to experience symptoms of depression and anxiety. They might also engage in unhealthy behaviors, such as using tobacco, drugs, and alcohol. Teens who are victims in high school are at higher risk for victimization during college and throughout their lifetimes. Visit the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#) for more detailed information about this serious problem and share this short video with your son/daughter/loved one. It's worth the 2:45 minutes to watch: [Sunshine - Don't Confuse Love & Abuse - Day One](#)

Teaching healthy relationship skills and changing norms about violence can help prevent teen dating violence. Talk to teens now about the importance of developing healthy, respectful relationships.

Created by:
Harvard
MEDICAL
SCHOOL

FIVE OF THE BEST EXERCISES

YOU CAN EVER DO

THESE "WORKOUTS" CAN DO WONDERS FOR YOUR HEALTH. THEY'LL HELP KEEP YOUR WEIGHT UNDER CONTROL, IMPROVE YOUR BALANCE AND RANGE OF MOTION, STRENGTHEN YOUR BONES, PROTECT YOUR JOINTS, PREVENT BLADDER CONTROL PROBLEMS, AND EVEN WARD OFF MEMORY LOSS.

SWIMMING



1. You might call swimming the perfect workout. The buoyancy of the water supports your body and takes the strain off painful joints so you can move them more fluidly.

TAI CHI



2. This Chinese martial art that combines movement and relaxation is good for both body and mind. It is made up of a series of graceful movements, one transitioning smoothly into the next.

STRENGTH TRAINING



3. If you believe that strength training is a macho, brawny activity, think again. Lifting light weights won't bulk up your muscles, but it will keep them strong.

WALKING



4. Walking is simple, yet powerful. It can help you stay trim, improve cholesterol levels, strengthen bones, keep blood pressure in check, lift your mood, and lower your risk for a number of diseases.

KEGEL EXERCISES



5. These exercises won't help you look better, but they strengthen the pelvic floor muscles that support the bladder. Strong pelvic floor muscles can go a long way toward preventing incontinence.

The Health Benefits of Vitamin C

Stress: A recent meta-analysis showed vitamin C was beneficial to individuals whose immune system was weakened due to stress -- a condition which is very common in our society. Because vitamin C is one of the nutrients sensitive to stress, and is the first nutrient to be depleted in alcoholics, smokers, and obese individuals, it makes it an ideal marker for overall health."

Colds: When it comes to the common cold, vitamin C may not be a cure. But some studies show that it may help prevent more serious complications. There is good evidence taking vitamin C for colds and flu can reduce the risk of developing further complications, such as pneumonia and lung infections.

Stroke: One study in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that those with the highest concentrations of vitamin C in their blood were associated with 42% lower stroke risk than those with the lowest concentrations. The reasons for this are not completely clear but what is clear is that people who eat plenty of fruits and vegetables have higher blood levels of vitamin C.

Skin Aging: Vitamin C affects cells on the inside and outside of the body. A study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition examined links between nutrient intakes and skin aging in 4,025 women aged 40-74. It found that higher vitamin C intakes were associated with a lower likelihood of a wrinkled appearance, dryness of the skin, and a better skin-aging appearance.

How much do you need? Adult women (who are not pregnant or breastfeeding) need 75mg/day; men 90mg/day. A ½ cup of raw red bell pepper or ¾ cup of orange juice will do it and ½ cup cooked broccoli gets you halfway there. Your body doesn't make or store Vitamin C so you have to eat it every day. Source: [WebMD](#)

Best Herbs for Your Health

No meal or snack should be naked. That's what dietitian Monica Auslander Moreno tells her clients.

"Herbs and spices make food tastier while boosting your health," says Moreno, an adjunct professor of nutrition at the University of Miami and a dietitian for the Miami Marlins. "You should be cooking with herbs and spices regularly -- and, if possible, using several at a time." If you're new to cooking with herbs and spices, try a pinch at a time to figure out which ingredients and flavor combinations you like.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Cardamom This sweet, pungent spice is in many pumpkin spice mixes. It's known to soothe an upset stomach, and lab studies show it may also help fight inflammation. One more perk? Cardamom is especially high in minerals like magnesium and zinc. **Chili peppers** Fresh, dried, or powdered, chilies may boost your metabolism and keep blood vessels healthy. One reason is capsaicin, the compound that makes them spicy. **Cinnamon** It's sweet but very low in calories and sugar-free. It's easy to find and not expensive, and you can add it to almost anything, including coffee and tea. Lab studies show that cinnamon may help with inflammation, fend off free radicals that can damage your cells, and fight bacteria. **Cocoa** The cocoa bean is chock-full of flavonoids, which are antioxidants that have been shown to boost heart health. Flavonoids seem to play a role in lowering cholesterol and blood pressure and helping keep your coronary (heart) arteries healthy, among other things. **Cumin** Used worldwide and known as a key ingredient in many Indian dishes, cumin is naturally rich in iron. It may play a role in weight loss, too. One study of 88 overweight women found that those who ate a little less than a teaspoon of cumin a day while on a low-calorie diet lost more body fat and weight as those on the same diet who didn't add cumin. **Garlic** This plant has a powerful compound called allicin. Lab studies have shown that it may lower your chances of getting heart disease. Other research shows that eating garlic regularly may help with high cholesterol and high blood pressure. But to get the benefits, you have to chop or crush the clove: Allicin is formed only after the cells in the garlic have been cut or crushed. **Ginger** This root can help with an upset stomach. It has a calming effect on the lining of your digestive system and can ease nausea, too. Lab studies also show that ginger has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties and may play a role in preventing diseases like cancer. **Rosemary** An ultra-fragrant herb, rosemary is rich in antioxidants that prevent cell damage. Even sniffing it may be good for you. One study found that people who got a whiff of rosemary performed better on memory tests and other mental tasks, compared with those who didn't. Researchers think one of its compounds, called 1,8-cineole, may boost brain activity. **Turmeric** It's a good source of curcumin, an antioxidant that eases inflammation. Research suggests that curcumin may help ease pain. Other research shows that eating even small amounts of turmeric regularly may help prevent or slow down Alzheimer's disease, possibly by helping prevent the brain plaques that lead to dementia.

Spicy Indian Dahl

2 tbsp. Ginger root	6 cloves, Garlic, minced
1 tsp mustard seed, ground	1 tbsp. Ground Coriander Seed
2 tbsp. Chopped onion	1 tbsp. Ground Cumin
3 Jalapeno peppers minced	1 cup Water
2 tbsp. Oil - Olive	1 tbsp. Salt
4 medium, Tomatoes, chopped	1 cup, Red Lentils Boiled
3 medium Onions, chopped	



Cook the lentils by boiling for approximately 8 minutes (if overcooked they become mushy). In a skillet heat the oil and add mustard seeds. When mustard seeds begin to flutter, add onions, ginger, jalapeno peppers, and garlic. Sauté until the onions and garlic are golden brown. Add coriander and cumin. Add chopped tomatoes. Sauté the mixture well until tomatoes are well cooked. Add water. Boil 6 minutes. Add cooked lentils, stirring well. Add salt to taste, stirring well. Add finely chopped cilantro and remove from heat. Serve hot.

Nutritional Information: Makes 6 servings: Per serving: 136 calories; Total Fat: 5g; Saturated: 1g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium: 91mg; Carbs: 18g; Fiber: 5g; Sugars: 5g; Protein: 5g; Vitamin C: 49%

Kids waistlines grow as their activity levels drop

Watching kids run, jump and swim at the beach this summer makes you wonder how any child could be overweight. But, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (CDC) obesity in American children continues to be a concern. Obesity rates more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years, according to the CDC, and a lack of regular activity has a lot to do with it.

The Last Word

“The ideal goal is 60 minutes a day,” said Sharon Daley, MD, a pediatrician at Seaside Pediatrics in West Yarmouth. “But children today are less likely to have unstructured outdoor play, so they are doing sedentary activities inside instead. If families can find something fun that they can do together, it’s good for the whole family. Things like bike riding or taking hikes are great.”

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation lists a number of factors, including lack of exercise that contributes to obesity in children. Other contributors they cite include:

- ✓ Too much screen time
- ✓ The marketing of unhealthy foods
- ✓ Increased portion sizes
- ✓ A higher consumption of sugary beverages



Previous generations spent twice as much time playing outdoors as the current generation. They also spent a lot more time in gym class. In the 1960’s and 70’s many schools had daily physical education, thanks to President John F. Kennedy’s challenge to become a more fit nation, followed by President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Presidential Physical Fitness Awards.

Elissa Thompson, MD, a cardiologist at The Cardiovascular Center sees the ravages of obesity up close. She has patients who have had heart attacks in their 20’s because of a combination of obesity and diabetes. “It really is frightening,” she said. “It’s still not fazing people that children are developing chronic diseases like Type 2 diabetes. It’s a hard thing for a child to learn to deal with – not just having a disease, but having something chronic that they have to deal with for their entire lifetime.”

While most states mandate some form of physical education, currently only six states adhere to the National Association of Sports and Physical Education guideline that schoolchildren get 150 minutes of it every week. Only three states have 20 minutes of mandatory recess a day. Massachusetts is not one of those states.

Pediatricians are well aware of this problem. When you walk into the waiting room at Seaside Pediatrics, a large display on the wall recommends 60 minutes of exercise a day with suggestions like jumping rope, chasing bubbles and dancing to your favorite song. But despite the suggestions, Dr. Daley said that most children are not getting enough exercise.

Prevention of obesity needs to be a focus for pediatricians, but it’s hard because of the many factors that contribute to it, she said. In addition to poor diets and lack of exercise, she also noted a more sensitive topic that is harder to address. “Parents who are overweight may not perceive their children as overweight,” she said. “I always tell parents you’re supposed to see a little bit of rib. If you are seeing rolls around the middle, you need to be concerned.” For the full article including studies and input from Nauset High follow this link to [Cape Cod Health News](#)

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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