



Your Health Matters

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

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More Americans Make the Jump from Overweight to Obese

Many Americans are in denial about the numbers on the scale which may help explain why a recent Gallup poll found that the obesity rates among American adults is still on the rise, clocking in at 27.7 percent in 2014. That means more Americans who were previously overweight have now moved into the obese category which makes sense: If you don't think that you're overweight, you're most likely not making the necessary lifestyle changes to shed those pounds and get your health back on track, making the slide into obesity even easier.

The results of the poll were obtained based on self-reported height and weights, which were then used to determine an individual's BMI. If you don't know your own BMI, it may be time to figure it out – the number will help you determine if you're in a healthy weight range for your height, or if you fall into the overweight or obese category. The image right shows the categories. If your BMI is 25 or higher, it's time to make some changes to prevent becoming a product of the rising obesity rate.



The key is to start small – the tiny changes you make every day really do add up. And the less that these changes disrupt your normal day-to-day routine, the more likely you are to stick with them. Try these tips below to improve your health and stay in that Healthy category:

Choose two of these simple breakfast swaps. Choosing bacon over sausage, eat fruit instead of drinking juice, and spreading jam on your toast instead of butter will all save you 100 calories at the breakfast table.

Add an All-Day Workout to your routine. Stretch for 3 minutes before and after work and walk at least 5 minutes for every 55 sitting. Spread throughout the day, this easy routine will stretch your muscles, get your heart pumping, and burn 100 to 200 calories.

Replace one soda a day with water. That sugary sip sets you back anywhere from 150 to 200 calories per serving. Opt for a club soda with a squeeze of lime for a refreshing, bubbly drink with zero calories.

Rehab your sandwich: Ditch the slice of cheese and eat it open-faced, with only one slice of bread to shave an easy 200 calories off your sandwich!

Source: everydayHEALTH



Yes, You Can Brush Too Much!!

There is too much of a good thing, even when it comes to brushing. Too much brushing, called “overbrushing,” can cause oral health problems just like not brushing enough can. Vigorous brushing and overbrushing can lead to sensitive teeth and irritated gums. Brushing vigorously isn’t necessary to remove plaque. Using a good brushing technique and being thorough is the best way to remove plaque.

The people most at risk for tooth or gum damage from overbrushing are those who are particularly diligent about their oral care or those who use toothbrushes with medium or hard bristles. It’s best to use a soft-bristled toothbrush to prevent gum damage and wear on the soft tooth dentin.

The best brushing technique is to place the head of your toothbrush with the tips of the bristles at a 45-degree angle to the gum line and move the toothbrush with short strokes and a circular scrubbing motion several times in each spot. Don’t saw back and forth across the teeth with your toothbrush. Be gentle! Apply just enough pressure to feel the bristles against the gums. If you are squashing the bristles, you’re brushing too hard. Remember to get just under the gum line and between the teeth where plaque builds up.

Brush your teeth gently for two to three minutes, twice daily for the best oral care. Always use a fluoride containing toothpaste to help remineralize and strengthen your teeth. Don’t forget to floss each day, too!



ahealthyme™ a healthy approach to fitness, family and fun

Win \$50 with Your New Year’s #HealthyResolutions

How do you plan to be healthier this year? Whatever your resolutions may be, we want to hear about it. For a chance to win \$50 this January, tell us on Facebook or Twitter using the hashtag #HealthyResolutions.

Keep Your 2015 Health Goals on Track

Putting the fun back into your exercise routine and keeping a training log can help you keep your fitness goals. Learn how to [stay motivated throughout the year](#).

Find Your Target Heart Rate

Your target heart rate is an important measure of how much sustained physical activity is safe and effective for you. [Use our target heart rate calculator](#) to get yours.



Harvard Pilgrim members have many money-savings options for purchasing eyeglasses, contact lenses or selecting laser vision correction. We’ve contracted with a number of ophthalmologists and optometrists throughout the region to bring you exceptional service and savings.

- Free Eyewear with exam
- Discounts on frames
- Discounts on contact lenses
- Discounts on laser vision correction
- Discounts on eyewear accessories



If you’re planning to have an eye exam coverage for your routine eye exam varies according to your specific health plan design. To confirm coverage, and before scheduling your appointment, please refer to your Schedule or Summary of Benefits or call Member Services. Remember to confirm that the ophthalmologist or optometrist is contracted with Harvard Pilgrim to perform an eye exam and not just contracted with us for eyewear savings. Confirm that your doctor is contracted with us at [Find a Doctor](#).



*You may have heard about the **\$avings** you can get through the **Good Health Gateway**® Diabetes Care Rewards Program. And, how having no co-pays on your covered diabetes medications and supplies can really add up over time.*

But what is more important than the money you save is that the Diabetes Care Rewards Program helps you to take steps to achieve Better Health.

The program helps to make sure you are getting important exams and labs to keep your diabetes in check and manage your blood sugar so you feel better and are healthier.

Participants in our program test their blood sugar more regularly and have much lower rates of hospitalizations than non-participants.

Take the Steps to Better Health.

The program is voluntary and confidential. It is offered at no cost to you by your employer/health plan sponsor.

HIPAA privacy and security standards are used to ensure the security of your health care information.



Call (800) 643-8028, or register online at GoodHealthGateway.com

Wellness News

Couch to 5k Running Program



Our next C25K program will take place in Dennis at the Flax Conservation Lands on Setucket Road beginning March 9th and ending May 6th. We will meet every Monday/Wednesday at 4:45pm. If you are interested in taking part in this fabulous program please contact me as soon as possible at capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com or 508-631-7263. Space is limited!! Remember that registration is on a first come basis and I am only able to accept the first 15 members! *As with all physical fitness programs: You must discuss this program with your doctor prior to start!*

Maintain Don't Gain Holiday Challenge

What a wonderful time I had with this program!! While this was a "maintain" program I found that many the participants actually LOST weight!! Here are some impressive numbers:

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!

Again, looking at these numbers is so amazing because it was not a weight loss program! Congratulations to everyone that participated, you did great!!

Our prize winners are as follows:

Withings Smart Body Analyzer Internet-connected Scale - Joyce Smith, KC Coombs School, Mashpee
Garmin Vivofit Fitness Band - Chuck Lawrence, Upper CC Technical School, Bourne
Garmin Vivofit Fitness Band - Sherry Prada, Town of Provincetown
Polar FT4 Fitness Heart Rate Monitor - Marcy Egan, EH Baker School, Dennis
Polar FT4 Fitness Heart Rate Monitor - Tracie Allard, Barnstable County
Free Assessment/Chiropractic Session at Gentle Chiropractic - Robbin Kelly, Town of Harwich
One Month Free Unlimited Yoga at the Yoga Center of Cape Cod - Nancy Ellis-Ice, Town of Brewster
One hour free Reiki Session with Reiki Master Jamie Nash - Maureen Hurst, Town of Provincetown
One hour free Massage at Health First Rehab - Kathy Grant, Sandwich STEM/High School



and a little more...

Biometric Screenings

We are scheduling into the spring! Services offered are: Blood Pressure and Pulse; Cholesterol and Glucose; Weight, Body Mass Index and Waist Measurement; UV skin damage assessment; Hearing Test; and Bone Density screening.

Kick Butts Program

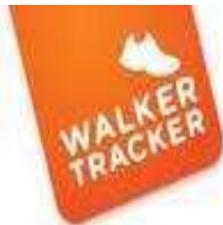
Our Eastham group is maintaining a fabulous track record of 86% success rate!! We will be conducting our next program in April (Date TBD) in Falmouth. If you are interested in this program, please contact me at capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com or 508-631-7263. It is an incredible step you can take to better your health!

Spring Walking Challenge

I will be conducting another 8-week team challenge to take place during the months of April, May and June. You will be logging your miles each day/week. All activities will count not just walking and we will have some fabulous prizes to give away too! Stay tuned in March to look for the flyers announcing the program!

Winter Programs on Martha's Vineyard

Walker Tracker has been a great addition on to our programs, with 40 participants signing up and logging in their activities/steps. November's challenge was who could log the most steps within the month. The winner logging a total of 485,000 steps in 30 days. MV Health and Wellness has remained in 3rd place out of ten companies throughout the country with the most steps logged with a total so far of 4,807,254. Visit the website at www.thechallenge.walkertracker.com the Company name in MV Health and Wellness.



Our MainTain Don't Gain Holiday Challenge kicked off November 24th with 21 people, 7 more than last year's Challenge. I have received weekly emails from mostly all participants with their personal tracker and completion of their weekly challenge. I also have received emails with updates on how everyone is doing with this holiday challenge and the obstacles they have had to overcome. The challenge will end January 5th with a grand prize of \$500 to spend on anything health related and raffle prizes of a CamelBak, FitBit and Body Analyzer.



The Public Safety Fitness Challenge I am happy to report IS STILL GOING ON!!!! B-Strong offered a 1 month membership with two group workouts a week to everyone who was involved in the challenge. For November they had eight people sign up with them and December 6 with more people joining. 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

See More Green

Here is an easy trick for killing it at the office: Get a desk plant! It can boost your concentration and make you 15% more productive according to a new study in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*. The reason is still a mystery though - it may be because the color green has been linked to creativity or because plants can improve air quality. Try a hardy variety like a ZZ plant or a Chinese evergreen plant!

WHAT IT DOES TO YOUR BODY

1. It is 75% of your brain
2. It regulates your body temperature
3. It keeps your skin looking young
4. It protects your heart
5. It helps you burn fat
6. It prevents constipation
7. It decreases fatigue
8. It carries oxygen to cells
9. It flushes toxins out
10. It helps you control calorie intake

HOW MUCH DO YOU REALLY NEED?

Your Weight (lbs) → Divide by 2 → = Number of Ounces

8 ounces = 1 cup 130lb woman = 8 cups

Legally Fabulous

5 pounds

The seemingly insignificant weight gain that can raise your blood pressure. Belly bulge is especially dangerous because visceral fat – deep in your abdomen – leads to hypertension and heart disease. More motivation to stay active this winter and not hibernate!!

Source: *Mayo Clinic*

Muscle Memory Hit the weights for brawn and brains. A 20 minute resistance-training session can improve your memory by 10 percent two days later, new research shows, possibly because hormones released during exercise affect brain processing.

Source: *Georgia Institute of Technology*

Table 2. The ACSM Guidelines for Resistance Training (2010)

Frequency	Intensity	Repetitions	Sets	Type
2-3 days/week with at least 48 hours rest for the same muscle groups	Moderate to hard; the last repetition should be difficult	8-12 (healthy adults) 10-15 (older adults)	2-4, with a rest interval of 2-3 minutes between sets	Multi-joint exercises using more than one muscle group. (May also include single-joint exercises.)

Pay Attention to Purple Fruit

A full rainbow of fruits and vegetables is your best strategy for getting a wide variety of nutrients, but those in rich in the colors red and purple may both raise good cholesterol and lower LDL levels. Anthocyanins are the chemicals in these fruits and vegetables that create these vivid colors. A Chinese study of 120 people given anthocyanin supplements showed increased HDL concentrations — 13.7 percent compared with 2.8 percent in the placebo group — and decreased LDL cholesterol. But you don't need a supplement when you can simply add HDL-raising food sources like plums, grapes, purple cabbage, eggplant, and raspberries to your diet. Plus eating more fruits and veggies (in addition to whole grains) will increase your fiber, which has been shown to help control overall cholesterol levels — aim for about 25 grams a day.

Source: everydayHEALTH

Food for thought



Nutrition Trends for 2015

Sprinkle Your Superfoods: This year, most registered dietitians (54 percent) named seeds and nuts as the superfoods that will reign in 2015. Kale remains the Queen of Greens though, with most of the nutrition experts surveyed agreeing that kale, Greek yogurt, coconut products and avocado are prevailing healthful food choices for consumers.

Go Green with Tea: When it comes to better beverages, green tea gets high marks, with 35 percent of dietitians selecting it as the drink of choice for its myriad of health benefits.

The “Beef” about Beef: Most consumers view animal-based protein, such as meat, fish and poultry, as high-quality, but nutrition pros rank quality proteins differently. Experts recommend fish and seafood, eggs, legumes and nuts, poultry and dairy as healthy, high-quality proteins, followed by soy. Red meat is less healthy, most likely due to the saturated fat, cholesterol and high environmental demands required to produce beef.

GMO-Free Matters: Dietitians predict that GMO-free, gluten-free, clean eating/clean ingredient lists and organic will have more of an impact on consumer choices in the coming year.

Other popular superfoods to watch for in 2015 include ancient grains, Greek yogurt and avocado. Nutrition experts say that consumers still look to gluten-free eating, while low-fat diets have fizzled. They also agree that consumers care about locally grown food and high-quality protein. To view all 15 trends visit: prnewswire

Classic Baked Macaroni and Cheese Recipe Remix

Ingredients:

- 1/2 tsp. Salt
- 2 cups Spinach - Raw
- 1/4 tsp. Pepper, black
- 1 cup chopped Tomato
- ¼ tsp. Pepper, red or cayenne
- ¼ cup minced onion
- 8 oz. Elbow Macaroni - Cooked
- 6 oz. 1/3 Fat Cream Cheese
- 1 tbsp. Butter - Salted
- 2 tbsp. Wheat flour - Whole-grain
- 2 cups Milk - Nonfat (fat free or skim)
- ½ cup Reduced Fat Cheddar Jack Shredded Cheese



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Microwave milk at HIGH for 1 1/2 minutes.
3. Melt butter in a large skillet or Dutch oven over medium-low heat; whisk in flour until smooth. Cook, whisking constantly, 30 – 60 seconds. It will be very thick!
4. Gradually whisk in warm milk, and cook, whisking constantly, 5 minutes or until thickened.
5. Whisk in salt, black pepper, 1/4 cup shredded cheese, cream cheese, and, if desired, red pepper until smooth. Stir in pasta, tomatoes, onions, and spinach until well blended.
6. Spoon pasta mixture into a lightly greased 2-qt. baking dish; top with remaining shredded cheese.
7. Bake at 400° for 20 minutes or until golden and bubbly.

Nutrition Facts: Makes 6 Servings: Per Serving: Calories 294; Total Fat 11g; Saturated Fat 6g; Monounsaturated Fat 1g; Trans Fat 0g; Cholesterol 31mg; Sodium 443mg; Potassium 285mg; Carbohydrate 37g; Fiber 2g; Sugars 2g; Protein 14g (25 %); Vitamin A 32 %; Vitamin C 13 %; Calcium 21 %; Iron 10 %

Finding the Road to Happiness

Why are some people happy and others less so? Scientists may never fully understand it and that may be because much of it has nothing to do with science at all. Studies show that if we engage in the established behaviors of happy people, we will be happier, says Sonja Lyubomirsky, PhD, professor of psychology at UC, Riverside, and author of **THE HOW OF HAPPINESS: A SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO GETTING THE LIFE YOU WANT**. "Of course, there are caveats," she says. "You have to pick a strategy that fits your personality, goals, and resources and put effort into it."



The Last Word

Here are some secrets of happy people – try them out, it's worth a shot!

Look for the Positive "Happy people are more likely than unhappy people to perceive themselves, as well as the world around them, positively," says Lyubomirsky. This also translates into seeing the future with optimism. The key here is to write down your hopes for the future, create goals and mini-goals, and go for them. Along the way identify any thoughts that seem to be pulling you down and replace them with more positive versions to be happier.

Nurture Relationships Not only do friendships and family relationships make you happier, the data also suggests that strong, supportive relationships help you live longer. Proven strategies for happiness are to make time for the ones you love or people you would like to get to know better; share in other people's successes with your own delight; show appreciation for the people in your life; and do something every week to support or further someone else's dreams.

Be Physically Active If you need one more reason to get up and get moving, here it is: You could be happier with regular exercise. Exercise is a proven method for preventing or managing negative emotions. You could get even further along the way to happiness if you can **work out with a group**, building relationships even as you start to feel better about your life and your body. The key to success is making a regular appointment with yourself to work out — and sticking with it.

Express Gratitude Send thank-you notes: not just the obligatory kind, but heartfelt letters. Gratitude is a great antidote to anger and bitterness. Expressing sincere gratitude for someone in your life in a letter actually makes you happier, even if you can't actually send or share the letter. Further, practicing gratitude for the little and big gifts in your life can push you along the way to happiness. Try writing down three to five things you are grateful for each week.

Offer Help to Others Happy people are often among the first to lend a hand. And while they probably aren't stepping up purely because it makes them feel good, the reality is that being helpful does allow you to feel better about yourself, which helps you be happier. It also strengthens your social networks and gives people another reason to like you. Remember to find ways to be helpful that suit your personality and overall lifestyle, so that you will make helping out a regular habit.

Forgive Forgiveness is a tough and deeply personal subject. People who can forgive generally have higher self-esteem and more joy and happiness in their lives. While forgiving someone in person may not be possible or advisable, you can still practice forgiveness by writing a letter or imagining what it would be like to forgive them in person. It might help to think about times in your life when you have been forgiven.

Take Pleasure in Small Things Savoring the big and little joys in your daily life increases self-esteem and may even protect against negative emotions, creating a buffer against stress. This particular habit includes reminiscing about happy times in your past, enjoying the little details of your daily life, taking time for a unique pleasure or a moment of beauty, and allowing yourself to fully appreciate even the bittersweet moments.



Make Spiritual Practice a Habit Religious or spiritual practice can help you get through hard times, give meaning to the good and bad days of life, and help you see the way to happiness more clearly. If you can join a spiritual group with similar beliefs, you will reap the benefits of social connections and experience greater happiness in your life. Lyubomirsky recommends regular prayer or meditation with a focus on seeing the spiritual in everyday life as a way to begin.

Source: [everydayHEALTH](#)

FITNESS BENEFIT REMINDER!!

Did you forget to get your \$150 fitness reimbursement in 2014? Well it's not too late!! Harvard Pilgrim and Blue Cross Blue Shield members must be filed by March 31st of this year in order to receive your reimbursement! Remember that you must be a member of a qualified health and fitness club for four months in a calendar year to qualify. Visit [HPHC](#) and [BCBS](#) to fill out your forms today!!

Wellness Champions Wanted!

Over the next few months I will be putting together local wellness committees with the intent of building a culture of health and encouraging participation in the CCMHG's wellness programs. You have fabulous programs available and I want to build on these successful programs and "champion" the belief that health comes from within. If you are interested in meeting quarterly or have suggestions please contact me. I welcome your input! We are all in this together



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
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