

Slow and steady wins the nutrition race • PAGE 4

Waist management: Lose it for good • PAGE 8

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About Health

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Aging Well

Six head-to-toe
strategies to stay
healthy through
the years **PAGE 6**



No More Excuses!

Without breaking a sweat, you can probably rattle off a dozen excuses for not starting a regular exercise program. Even though a recent study in the medical journal *Diabetes Care* found that fitter men with diabetes live longer, it's still hard for some to start exercising. But here are three easy ways for anyone to stop avoiding physical activity, according to the federal Weight-Control Information Network:

- 1 **Team up.** Join a class or sports league where people expect you to show up. If your basketball team or dance partner counts on you, a lame excuse just won't do the trick.
- 2 **Beat boredom.** Make a list of activities you enjoy—hiking, gardening, dancing or bicycling—and rotate so that you don't overdo it with any one routine.
- 3 **Make a date.** Put exercise on your calendar, and commit to keeping these important "appointments."

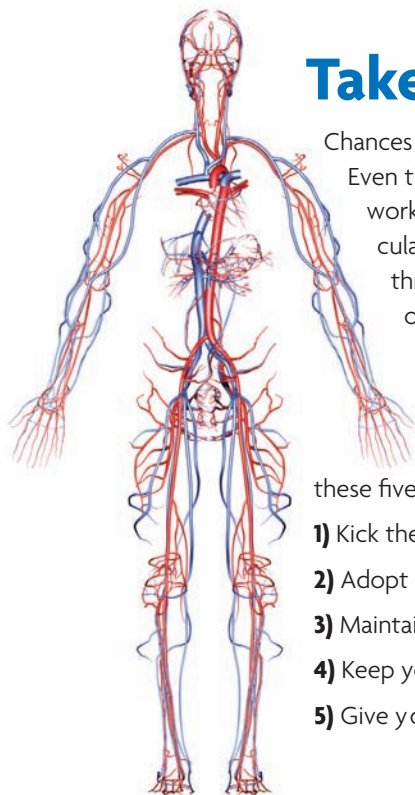
TO YOUR HEALTH The RWJ Hamilton Center for Health & Wellness has 200+ group fitness classes a week, state-of-the-art equipment, three pools and educational programs. Learn more about membership opportunities at rwjhamiltonwellness.com.



Take Care of Your Veins

Chances are, you don't think about your veins unless you're in pain. Even though they may not get much attention, they are always working for you. It's the veins and arteries that make up the vascular system that are responsible for carrying oxygen-rich blood throughout the body. With age, arteries can develop a buildup of plaque and cholesterol and become more stiff and narrow. This restriction of blood flow can lead to a number of complications, including carotid artery disease and problems walking. Diabetes may also increase the risk of developing vascular disease. To improve your vascular health, follow these five health tips:

- 1) Kick the smoking habit for good.
- 2) Adopt a healthy, low-fat diet.
- 3) Maintain good cholesterol levels.
- 4) Keep your blood pressure in a normal range.
- 5) Give yourself the gift of daily exercise.



*Honesto Poblete, MD,
board certified surgeon
with the RWJ Hamilton
Vascular Surgery Group*

(healthy veins) For diagnosis and treatment, choose the RWJ Hamilton Vascular Surgery Group, 3525 Quakerbridge Road, Hamilton. Call **609.570.2071**.



Snore No More

Do you snore or do you share a room with a snorer? Ever wonder why it happens and what you can do to deal with it?

Snoring occurs because of vibration of tissues in the throat or behind the tongue. Sleep apnea, nasal blockages, a deviated septum, congestion from colds or allergies, even acid reflux can cause snoring.

The state-of-the-art SleepCare Center at RWJ Hamilton can improve your health and quality of life by diagnosing and treating the full range of sleep disorders. The study is painless and designed for your comfort. Most major insurance carriers should cover your test.

If your partner is a regular snorer, here are eight tips to improve your sleep and relationship:

- 1 If your snorer is overweight, get him (or her) to lose it. Weight is a big factor in snoring.
- 2 Slip your snorer a virgin margarita or other alcohol-free drink for that nightcap. Alcohol causes snoring because it relaxes throat muscles.
- 3 Nudge your snorer to make him or her roll over and not sleep on the back. There is less snoring with side sleeping.
- 4 Make this little “reminder”: get an old tube sock, put three tennis balls in it and attach it to the back of his nightshirt. When rolling on his back, that little cue will make him roll back on his side.
- 5 Get earplugs; they work wonders.
- 6 Try nasal strips, which work especially well for people with narrow noses.
- 7 Go to bed before your snorer so you're in deeper sleep stages when he turns in.
- 8 Invest in a white-noise generator to drown out the sound.

SWEET DREAMS Visit
rwjhamilton.org/sleep for
 more information, or call the
RWJ Hamilton SleepCare Center
 toll-free at **1.866.SLEEP40.**

THE YEAR 2030

It's predicted that in 2030, when the youngest baby boomers are 66 and the oldest are 84, the number of disabled older adults will actually decline, thanks to better education and better science—and sweat equity in fitness programs. One estimate puts the number as low as 1.6 million (3 percent of the older adult population) while another predicts 11 million, which is still 40 percent fewer than in 1982. To stay fit, check out our many Seniors Programs featured in *HealthCheck Magazine*. Join our FREE 50+ Club and enjoy special discounts and classes. Call HealthConnection at 609.584.5900 or go to rwjhamilton.org.



A 2-for-1 Deal

We've all heard about the health benefits of breastfeeding for babies. But did you know it's a two-for-one bargain for moms as well? Here are the advantages for you both:



BENEFITS FOR YOU	BENEFITS FOR YOUR BABY
May lower risk for heart disease	Fewer illnesses due to the mother's antibodies in human milk
May lower risk for strokes	Human milk straight from the breast is always sterile, never contaminated
Can help you lose pregnancy weight and stimulates the uterus to contract back to its original size	Sucking at the breast promotes good jaw development and encourages the growth of straight, healthy teeth
May decrease your odds of developing diabetes	A sense of security and warmth from the nursing mother

(gain mom-fidence) Join other new moms and learn about breastfeeding techniques and parenting issues. The Breastfeeding Support Group meets Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. at the RWJ Hamilton Center for Health & Wellness.

Sources: Obstetrics & Gynecology, May 2009; U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Tastes Slow Good

**Good things come to those who wait—
so apply these lessons to your next meal**

SLOW DOWN, YOU MOVE TOO FAST. You've got to make the morning last. OK, perhaps Simon & Garfunkel weren't singing about breakfast, but maybe they could have been. Why? Because there are numerous benefits to taking time to prepare and enjoy your meals. Here are just a few.

No Surprise Ingredients

Research shows most Americans don't know how to effectively read a nutrition label. But when you prepare a meal yourself from ingredients such as fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, you know exactly what is included and how much.

Portion Control

Ever notice how easy it is to go from famished to being stuffed in just one meal? That's because it takes 10 to 15 minutes for the full-stomach (satiety) signal to reach the brain, says Kanwal Singh, RD, clinical nutrition manager at RWJ Hamilton. "It's amazing how many unnecessary calories you can shovel in if you aren't paying attention and taking time to eat, as you haven't given time to your brain to signal a feeling of fullness. Always watch your portion size and give yourself a few minutes for a fullness signal to kick in before going for extra servings to curb that hunger. Eating too quickly may lead to weight gain or act as a barrier to losing weight."

Nutritional Absorption

When you're wolfing down your food, you don't chew each bite as thoroughly as you should. "This may reduce absorption of vitamins and minerals as the food moves through the intestines," says Singh. "Slowing down and thoroughly chewing your food

allows those vitamins and minerals to absorb better into your bloodstream for your body to use effectively."

Meaningful Conversation

There's a reason schools and many offices have cafeterias or kitchens designated for mealtime—to provide an environment conducive to socializing and eliminating distractions. So when you're home, act similarly. "The social gathering of a family meal is as nourishing as food," says Singh. "The conversations also assist the group in eating at a slower pace." If you're dining alone, she suggests finding a place without distractions. ■



Kanwal Singh, RD



(afternoon tea) Wednesday, December 9, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., join Abbie Katz from the senior well-being program and Shirley Roberts, MA, LPC, at the RWJ Hamilton Center for Health & Wellness for tea and conversation about the physical, intellectual and psychological changes women face as they age. Call **609.584.5900**. Fee: \$5.



On the run

If you're juggling work, family priorities, errands and social commitments, you probably can't remember the last time you sat down to an unrushed meal. Luckily, your grocery store likely offers options to help you eat right, even on the run. Try these:

PRODUCE. Buy precut and prewashed lettuce, carrots, bell peppers and cherry tomatoes for a fast salad. Or stock up on precut fruit such as pineapple, mango or berry salads for a quick snack. Sure, they cost a bit more, but the convenience is priceless.

DAIRY. Many low-fat and fat-free dairy products come prepackaged and easy to grab out of your fridge when hunger strikes. Try string cheese, yogurt or cottage cheese cups.

SNACKS. One-hundred-calorie packs of your favorite chips and cookies make snacking easy while enforcing portion control. Just don't let yourself reach for more than one.



Savory Couscous and Vegetable Skillet Dinner

It's OK to splurge on seconds with this low-calorie and low-fat vegetable and grain combination. Eating large amounts of greens and grains fills you up so you can stick to your healthy lifestyle.

INGREDIENTS:

1 Tbsp. grated fresh ginger root
 1 small onion, chopped
 1 small red bell pepper, cored, seeded and chopped
 1 medium sweet potato, peeled and cut into ½-in. cubes
 2 medium carrots, pared and cut into ½-in. pieces
 2 Tbsp. chopped, sun-dried tomato*
 ½ tsp. hot red pepper sauce or more to taste
 ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
 ⅜ tsp. salt
 ¼ tsp. pepper
 1 c. canned garbanzo beans
 ¼ c. raisins
 1½ c. vegetable broth, divided
 1½ c. green beans in bite-size pieces
 ¾ c. whole-wheat couscous**
 4 cilantro leaves or sprigs

*Use dry, not oil-packed, sun-dried tomatoes. Soak 3 or 4 tomato halves in boiling water for 10 minutes to soften. Drain and chop.

**If you can't find whole-wheat couscous, use the refined grain; you will get about 6 g dietary fiber per serving.

DIRECTIONS:

1 Spray large nonstick skillet with cooking spray. Add ginger root, onion and bell pepper. Cook over medium heat for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add sweet potato, carrots, tomato, pepper sauce, cinnamon, salt and pepper. Cook over medium heat 1 minute. Add beans, raisins and ½ cup vegetable broth.

2 Cover skillet, reduce heat to low and simmer 20 to 25 minutes or until carrots are almost tender. Add green beans, cover and simmer 5 minutes. Add remaining 1 cup broth. Bring to a boil. Stir in couscous. Cover. Cook over low heat 3 minutes or until couscous absorbs broth. Remove from heat and set aside for 5 minutes. Fluff with fork. Garnish with cilantro.

Makes 4 (2-c.) servings. Each serving has: 320 calories; 2.5 g total fat; 11.5 g protein; 53 g carbohydrates; 300 mg sodium; and 10 g dietary fiber.

HEALTHY EATS Visit rwjhamilton.org and click "HealthConnection" or call 609.584.5900 to register for one of our healthy cooking classes.

Older and Wiser

Head-to-toe tips for staying healthy for years to come

IF 40 IS THE NEW 20, THEN 70 IS THE NEW 50, RIGHT? Perhaps—if you take a few savvy steps that can help slow the natural aging process.

YOUR BRAIN

Losing memory and brain function is not a normal part of aging, says Mark Risi, DO, FAAFP, board certified in internal medicine and chief of staff at RWJ Hamilton. But just like any other part of your body, the brain needs exercise to stay strong and healthy.

Studies have shown that keeping both your brain and your body active can stave off mental decline, says Michael Duch, MD, board certified orthopaedic surgeon at RWJ Hamilton. “I’ve given patients a prescription to take a ballroom dancing class, because it exercises your body and your brain,” he explains. Any mental stimulation is beneficial, whether it’s doing crossword puzzles, working on the computer or having an engaging conversation.

YOUR BONES, MUSCLES AND JOINTS

To build strong bones, you need to do weight-bearing exercise—even if you have arthritis, which a majority of people will develop as they age. Lifting weights (even light hand weights or resistance bands), doing push-ups and walking all count as weight-bearing activities. Getting enough calcium and vitamin D is also important to maintain strong bones, Dr. Duch says, and many people need a vitamin supplement to get adequate amounts. Exercise is equally good for your muscles and joints, which you need to keep strong and flexible to maintain maximum mobility, Dr. Risi adds. He also recommends stretching, such as yoga, to stay flexible, and exercises that promote good balance, like tai chi.



YOUR EYES

Many people notice changes in their vision as they get older, and 17 percent of those older than 65 report having trouble seeing. Dr. Risi suggests wearing sunglasses, which can help reduce cataract formation, and asking your doctor about taking vitamin supplements specially formulated for eye health.



*Michael Duch, MD,
board certified
orthopaedic surgeon
at RWJ Hamilton*



*Mark Risi, DO, FAAFP,
board certified in
internal medicine and
chief of staff at
RWJ Hamilton*

YOUR SKIN AND HAIR

Over time, our skin loses elasticity, and our hair loses pigmentation and starts to thin. The best way to keep your skin healthy and young-looking is to avoid sun exposure, says Dr. Risi. "And using too much soap can lead to dry, cracked skin, so limit soap to only really dirty areas like your feet and underarms," he adds. The same goes for shampoo: If you wash your hair a little less often, you'll have healthier hair that's less prone to thinning.

YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

As you age, your immune system weakens, Dr. Duch says, which is why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that older adults get a flu shot every year. Also ask your doctor about other vaccines you may need, such as a booster shot for whooping cough or protection against pneumonia and shingles.

YOUR CORE

It's not unusual to gain weight as you get older; in women, menopause can add about five pounds, including fat to your waist. Help keep the core of your body in shape by toning abdominal muscles through exercises like sit-ups or using a stability ball. Plus, a stronger core will protect your back, is good for your posture and can help your balance, Dr. Duch says. And be sure to maintain a healthy weight, which is good advice at any age.



(stay active to stay young)

Join our 50+ Club Walkers and enjoy increased energy, brighter spirits, weight control, and increased strength and endurance while making new friends. Call HealthConnection at **609.584.5900**.

Waist Management

There is a surefire way to lose pounds—
and keep them off

EVERY DAY THE HEADLINES HYPE ANOTHER WEIGHT-LOSS APPROACH: cut your carbs, drink more milk, sleep more, eat less sugar.

But there is a time-tested, diet-free way to lose weight. “Magic bullets don’t exist and don’t work,” says RWJ Hamilton’s Lisa Dobruskin, MD, board certified in general surgery and fellowship trained in minimally invasive weight loss surgery. “But there is a surefire way to lose weight. It’s not a quick fix, but it’s a healthy and long-term fix.” So what is it? A lifestyle that mixes variety, moderation and physical activity. Here’s a breakdown of each.

Variety—the Spice of Life

We’ve all heard the term “balanced diet,” but within that there’s room for tremendous variety. “You can individualize a food plan to meet your food goals and fit into your lifestyle,” Dr. Dobruskin says, adding that a good place to start is the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet. Although the DASH diet was developed to combat high blood pressure, it is a good model for everyone to follow. Another is the Mediterranean diet, which is high in fish and poultry, whole grains, fruits and vegetables and olive oil.

Everything in Moderation

Portion distortion is a big problem that leads to big waistlines. Dr. Dobruskin recommends curbing the amount of food

you eat at each sitting. But you don’t need to measure or weigh every meal.

Check food label serving sizes for starters. An object-association lesson may help, too. For example:

- One serving of cooked meat, fish or poultry is about the size of a deck of playing cards.
- One serving of peanut butter is the size of a golf ball.
- One serving of cheese is the size of four dice.
- One medium potato is the size of a computer mouse.
- One serving of pasta is the size of a tennis ball.
- One average bagel is the size of a hockey puck.



In general, a reasonable portion should fit in the palm of your hand.

Get Moving

Finally, add exercise to your weight-management goals. Your heart will function better, your risk for diabetes and cancer will decrease, you’ll sleep better—and you’ll have an easier time watching your weight.

“Activity factors in equally with food,” Dr. Dobruskin says, adding that cutting calories without engaging in physical activity may not bring the desired results. Try to work at least 30 minutes of physical activity into your daily routine. You can even do it in two or three separate intervals. Take a brisk walk, go up and down your stairs or just march around your living room. ■



*Lisa Dobruskin, MD,
board certified general
surgeon at RWJ
Hamilton*

(eat for weight-loss surgery) Thursday, December 10, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., join Lisa Dobruskin as she helps you navigate the mealtime perils of the holiday season. For anyone considering or having completed bariatric surgery. Fee: \$10. Call **609.584.5900**.