

## Oranges: A Weapon For Healthy Living

If you're in the northern city of Ivrea, Italy, on February 18, watch out for flying oranges. Thousands of people will fill the streets for the Battle of the Oranges. It's the biggest food fight in Italy. The event dates back to the Middle Ages when villagers overthrew a tyrant. But instead of wielding clubs and swords, today's participants will throw oranges as weapons to remember the victory. About 500,000 oranges are used in the annual battle. And it's a juicy mess.

But there are plenty of oranges for everyone. In the United States alone, orange growers produce about 8.9 million tons of oranges a year. The average person consumes 34 pounds of oranges a year. You can peel an orange and enjoy the fruit. Or squeeze your own citrus-flavored orange juice to drink.

Try these orange juice drink recipes <http://tinyurl.com/c9o2fpc>



They taste great, and they are a good source of vitamin C and fiber. One orange contains about 116 percent of the daily value of vitamin C you need. Vitamin C can help strengthen your immune system, lower the risk for heart disease and stroke, and help prevent certain types of cancers. Oranges are also a good source of fiber. One orange contains about 12.5 percent of the fiber your body needs every day. Fiber can help lower bad cholesterol levels, regulate blood sugar levels, and even reduce the risk for certain types of cancer. Pick up an orange the next time you're at the grocery store. But refrain from throwing it. It's better for your health to eat the fruit or drink the juice. For best health, aim to eat about two cups of fruit a day.

*Agriculture Marketing Resource Center.*

*U.S. Department of Agriculture.*

*American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2012.*

*Harvard School of Public Health.*

## Take the Stairs for Better Health

You walk into an office building or hotel and need to get to an upper floor. Do you look around for the elevator or head for the stairs?

Most people choose the elevator, even though using the stairs would not take much longer. But if you do choose to take the stairs, you'll be adding some exercise to your outing. And your heart will reap the benefit. In a recent study, people who climbed a few flights of stairs for a total of 13.5 minutes a day over six weeks lowered their resting heart rate and increased their good cholesterol level.

Taking the stairs instead of the elevator can also help you lose weight.

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## Your Waist Size Has a Message for You

Take a look in the mirror. Are you slim and trim? If not, does your body shape look more like an apple than a pear? If you're willing to listen, your waistline has a message for you. The size of your waistline can tell you if you're headed for trouble.

Research shows that a healthy waist circumference is less than 32 inches for women and less than 37 inches for men. A waist of 35 inches for women, 40 inches for men, is considered obese. A larger waist size increases your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and early death. And if most of your body fat is located at your waist (apple-shaped), instead of your hips, thighs, and lower body (pear-shaped),

you're at greater risk because of the extra fat in and around your abdominal organs.

To find your waist size, use a flexible tape measure. Start at your belly button and wrap the tape measure all the way around your waist. Don't hold your tummy in when you measure.

If you're a little larger around the middle than is healthy, don't just stand there looking in the mirror. Commit to exercising 30 to 60 minutes a day. Improve your diet. Eat more healthy foods, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and legumes, and fewer high-calorie and refined foods. And stick with it. You'll start to see your hard work pay off when you step on the scale and your clothes fit better.

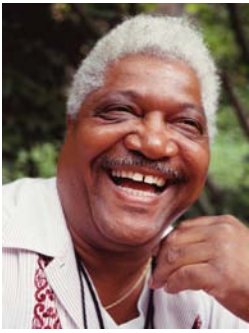
*Harvard School of Public Health.*

*The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.*

*National Institutes of Health.*

Measure your waist circumference <http://tinyurl.com/d39vrlr>





## Happiness Helps Prevent Heart Disease

Even when faced with problems, some people are still happy. But does looking on the bright side of things have any impact on your health? Yes. A positive outlook can help prevent heart disease or slow its progression.

Researchers recently found that being happy can lower the risk for heart disease. And the finding was the same regardless of a person's age, income, or body weight, or whether or not they smoked. In fact, the happiest people were 50-percent less likely to have heart problems. They were also more likely to have lower blood pressure and normal body weight. It's an important finding. That's because heart disease is a major problem in the United States. About 600,000 people die from heart disease each year. Exercise, healthy foods, and medication can help prevent the disease. But it

appears that an optimistic, happy outlook on life can also reduce your risk for heart disease.

Here are some things you can do to be happier:

- Identify your character strengths.
- Recognize your successes.
- Be grateful.
- Write down your achievements.
- Identify things you do well.
- Talk to yourself positively.
- Help other people.
- Ask for help.
- Laugh more.

*Harvard School of Public Health.*

*Psychological Bulletin.*

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*



## No Time to Exercise is Not an Excuse

One of the most common excuses people make for not exercising is a lack of time. Yet, the average American watches about four hours of TV a day. If you've been making excuses for not exercising, it's time to get off the couch.

New research shows that even a small amount of exercise done right can help you burn extra calories. In the study, a group of men ate a controlled diet for five days. The men spent their time watching movies or using a computer. The amount of calories they burned was also measured.

On one of the days, the participants exercised for a total of 22.5 minutes. For 30 seconds, they pedaled a stationary bicycle with high resistance as fast as possible. Then they pedaled slowly

for four minutes with very little resistance. They repeated this five times. Researchers found that the effort helped the men burn 200 more calories per day than on the sedentary days.

If you did this daily for about two weeks, you could burn enough calories to lose one pound of fat. And you can do this while watching TV. Use your stationary bike. Run in place, do jumping jacks, or jump rope during commercials. You'll feel better, burn extra calories, and still catch your favorite shows.

*American Physiological Society. 2012.*

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

*National Institutes of Health.*

## Take the Stairs

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Walking up the stairs burns three times more calories than riding the elevator. And you don't need any special equipment or gym membership to do it.

*American Council on Exercise.*

Find out how many calories you can burn by taking the stairs!

*American Journal of Preventive Medicine.*

[tinyurl.com/94ym7](http://tinyurl.com/94ym7)



## ASK THE WELLNESS DOCTOR

**Q:** How much do I need to exercise to lose weight?

**A:** Go to [www.wellsourc.info/wn/ask-exercise-lose-weight.pdf](http://www.wellsourc.info/wn/ask-exercise-lose-weight.pdf) to read the answer from Don Hall, DrPH, CHES.

To ask your question, email: [evan@wellsourc.com](mailto:evan@wellsourc.com), subject line: Ask the Wellness Doctor. Emails with any other subject line will be directed to the spam folder.

**Health Challenge:** "Add More Whole Grains to Meals" available at: [www.wellsourc.info/wn/hc-whole-grains.pdf](http://www.wellsourc.info/wn/hc-whole-grains.pdf)  
Eat at least three servings a day.