



Food Diary Doubles Weight Loss

If you want to lose weight, try keeping track of what you eat. Recent

research suggests one of the best tools for weight loss is a food diary.

In a recent study, dieters who wrote down everything they ate lost twice as much weight as those who didn't.

About 1,700 overweight adults were part of the study. Each weighed an average of 212 pounds. During the 20-week study, the dieters who kept a food diary six days or more a week lost an average of 18 pounds.

Those who did not keep a food diary only lost an average of 9 pounds in six months.

Keeping a food diary can help you keep your calories in check. By cutting about 500 calories a day from your diet, you could lose 1 to 2 pounds a week. You would also reduce your risk for heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

- **Use a paper-based food diary to keep track of what you eat.**

You can also track your diet and calorie intake online or with a smartphone app.

- **Record everything you eat and drink,** the location, and time of day you're eating or snacking.

- **Be honest.** Review your eating habits and consider ways to eat fewer calories and make healthier food choices.

- **Be accountable.** Plan to review your food diary with your doctor or nutritionist.

American Journal of Preventive Medicine. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. National Heart, Blood and Lung Institute.

Use this free food diary <http://tinyurl.com/27aaoa>

Lack of Sleep Increases Risk for Stroke

A lot of things can keep you awake at night like stress, anxiety, or too much caffeine. Or you might just be one of those people who likes to stay up late to watch TV, or get things done. But the amount of sleep you get is directly related to your health.

Researchers looked at the sleep habits of 5,665 people in a three-year study. They found that people who slept six hours or less a night, were four times more likely to suffer a stroke. That's compared to people who slept seven to eight hours a night. None of the participants had a history of stroke before the study. Nor did they report insomnia, depression, or other conditions that would lead to loss of sleep.

About 137,000 people in the United States die each year of a stroke. Anyone can have a stroke, regardless of age, race, or gender.



Major risk factors for stroke include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, tobacco use, lack of exercise, and obesity. Researchers now believe that not getting enough sleep may also be a risk factor for stroke.

To sleep better and longer:

- Be physically active every day.
- Establish a bedtime routine.
- Avoid alcohol, coffee, and meals late at night.
- Don't watch TV in bed.
- Develop a routine that helps you relax and prepare for bedtime.
- And take a midday nap if you need one.

American Academy of Sleep Medicine. National Sleep Foundation. National Institutes of Health.

Get a good night's sleep www.wellsources.com/info/wn/sleep.pdf



Pedal Power Improves Health

When Lawrence Dye retired as a state auditor, he was done with sitting at a desk all day. So the Virginia resident decided to do something different. He hopped on a bike and started pedaling.

But it wasn't for a joyride through the park. He pedaled the entire 68 miles of the Virginia Creeper Trail. And he's been doing it every day for the last 20-plus years.

"Some people say it's crazy to do it, but I do it anyway," says Lawrence.

At 81 years old, he's logged more than 165,000 miles on his bike. And he's known as The Legend of the Creeper Trail.

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Diabetes Increases Risk for Disability

An estimated 26 million people have diabetes in the United States.

As many as 1 in 3 adults could have diabetes by 2050. And that means millions of people will be unable to walk, drive, eat, bathe, or get dressed without assistance, according to a recent study.

Researchers reviewed 26 studies that looked at the link between disability and diabetes. They found that diabetes increases the risk for developing a disability by 50 to 80 percent as you age.

Diabetes is a disease that limits your body's ability to control blood sugar levels. Over time, it can lead to poor circulation, blindness, kidney failure, heart disease, and stroke.

If you want to live a long and healthy life, do everything you can to avoid diabetes. Here are four ways to prevent diabetes:

- 1. Achieve and maintain a healthy weight.** If overweight, losing 10 to 15 pounds can reduce your risk for diabetes.
- 2. Get regular physical activity.** Exercise helps the body use insulin more effectively. Aim for 30 to 60 minutes of exercise a day.

- 3. Avoid smoking.** A Harvard study found that smoking increased the risk for diabetes by 92 percent.

- 4. Eat healthy foods.** Build an eating plan based on fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, and whole grains. If you eat meat, choose lean meats, fish, and poultry, in place of red meats.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology. Harvard School of Public Health.

Follow the Diabetes Prevention Program tinyurl.com/6zjqqxc

Pedal Power

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If you want to improve your health, you don't have to pedal a bike 68 miles a day. But research shows that cycling is an effective form of exercise.

In a recent study, researchers found that cycling as little as five minutes a day helped middle-aged women avoid weight gain. In a separate study, people who pedaled for 20 minutes a day before breakfast burned an average of 1,100 a week with this minimal amount of exercise. Researchers also found that dropping your bike into a bigger gear during a ride and pedaling fast for 30 seconds burns more calories in less time.

In addition to weight loss, cycling can also help you build muscle and strengthen your heart and lungs. But the benefits of bicycling don't stop there. You'll feel better and reduce your risk for many chronic diseases. And you might even meet the The Legend of the Creeper Trail along the way.

Virginia Creeper Trail Club. Archives of Internal Medicine. Journal of Applied Physiology.

Blueberries Bursting with Health Benefits

- ✓ It's the official berry of Nova Scotia, Canada.
- ✓ Their sweet and sour taste inspired American poet Robert Frost to write a poem.
- ✓ And 17-year-old New York resident Zachary Wightman holds the record for growing the heftiest blueberry in the world (8 grams).
- ✓ They're even considered a superfood by many health experts.

Blueberries can transform a bowl of cereal, fruit smoothie, muffin recipe, or fruit salad, into a tasty and healthy vitamin-packed treat. Blueberries contain high levels of antioxidants. And they're rich in vitamin C, fiber and potassium. These nutrients can help strengthen your immune system and improve digestion. Antioxidants in berries can also help prevent cancer, slow memory loss as you age and improve cholesterol and blood pressure.

In a recent study, researchers found that people who ate at least one serving of berries a week were 10 percent less likely to develop high blood pressure. Other studies have found that berries can help lower the risk for heart disease and diabetes. You can improve your health by

making one simple change to your diet – Eat more blueberries. They're easy to add to cereal, yogurt, oatmeal, and smoothies. And they taste just as good by the handful.

U.S. Department of Agriculture. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry.

Try these blueberry recipes <http://tinyurl.com/n2lwkgm>

ASK THE WELLNESS DOCTOR

Q: Are there things I can do to prevent back pain?

A: Go to www.wellsource.info/wn/ask-back-pain.pdf to read the answer from Don Hall, DrPH, CHES.

To ask your question, email: evan@wellsource.com, subject line: Ask the Wellness Doctor. Emails with any other subject line will be directed to the spam folder.

Health Challenge: "Drink More Water" available at: www.wellsource.info/wn/hc-drink-water.pdf

Drink 40 to 64 ounces of water a day.