

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Medical News .....	1
Self-Care Corner .....	2
Be Fit.....	3
Healthy Eating .....	4
Health Tips .....	6
Work Life.....	7
Community Life .....	8

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY FACULTY AND STAFF WELLNESS PROGRAM

# Living Well



Fall 2009

Promoting Health. Enhancing Life.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1★	2	3
4	5	6	7★	8	9	10
11	12★	13	14★	15	16	17
18	19	20	21★	22	23	24
25	26★	27	28★	29	30	31

Farmers' Market ★  
Every Wednesday  
through November  
11:00am - 4:00pm  
On the Quad in front of Ward

Seated Massages ★  
Monday October 12 and 26  
11:00am - 2:15pm  
McKinley 153

Germ Machine ★  
Wednesday October 7  
11:00am - 4:00pm  
On the Quad in front of Ward

Walktober Begins ★  
Thursday October 1  
through November 12

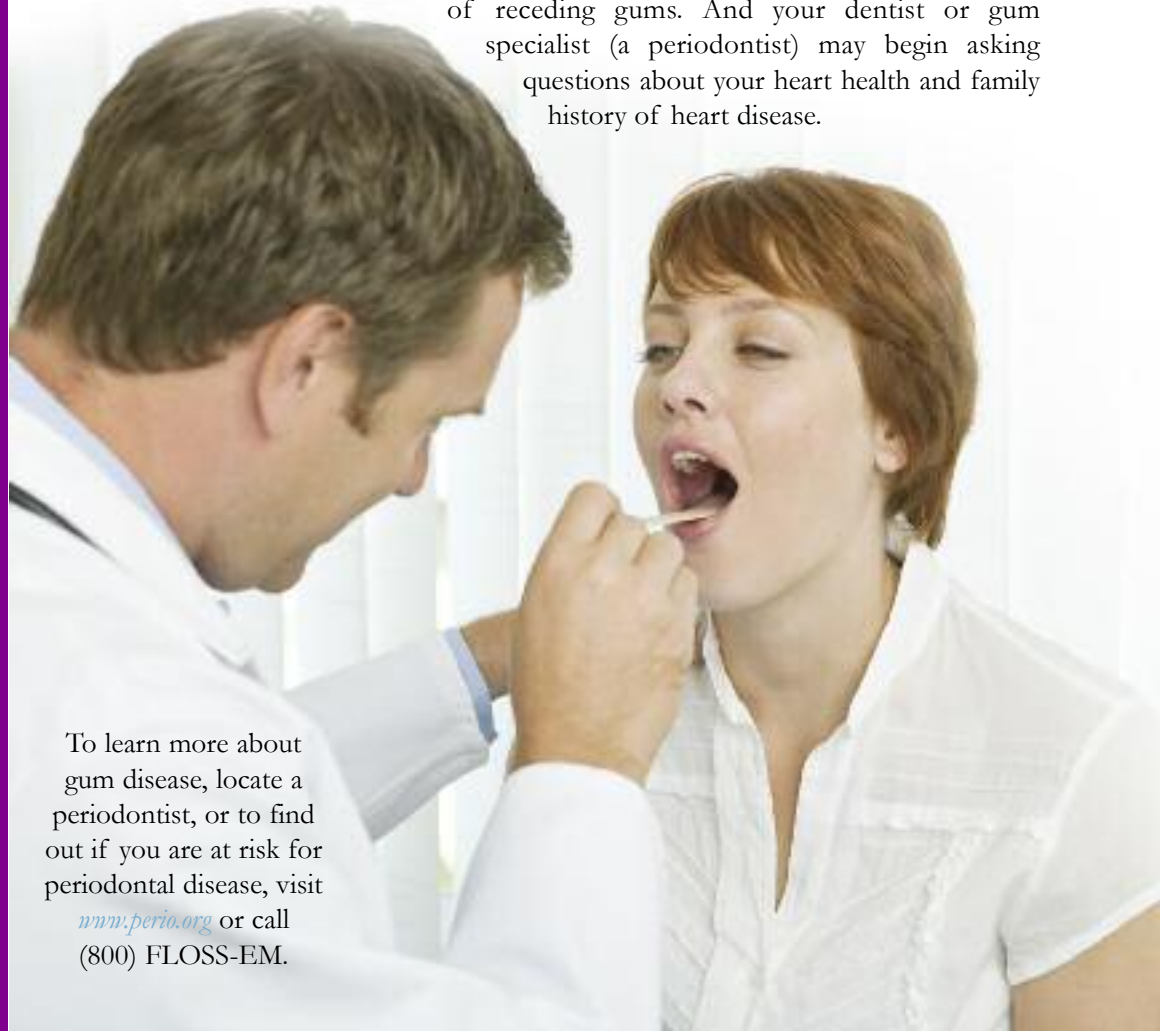
For more information and  
events visit  
[american.edu/hr/wellness.cfm](http://american.edu/hr/wellness.cfm)

## What do your gums have to do with your heart?

Some people manage heart disease. Others are managing gum disease—inflammation that destroys bone and gum tissues that support the teeth. New research suggests that managing one disease may reduce the risk for the other.

A paper on the relationship between heart disease and gum disease was recently published in the American Journal of Cardiology and the Journal of Periodontology.

As a result of the paper, you might find your heart doctor taking a look at the health of your teeth and gums. The doctor will be looking for redness, tooth loss, and signs of receding gums. And your dentist or gum specialist (a periodontist) may begin asking questions about your heart health and family history of heart disease.



To learn more about gum disease, locate a periodontist, or to find out if you are at risk for periodontal disease, visit [www.perio.org](http://www.perio.org) or call (800) FLOSS-EM.

# SELF-CARE CORNER

## More than helmets, cycle safely

Whether you are an avid rider or a first-time cyclist, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons warns bicyclists of all ages to follow these smart safety measures:

- \* It's about the helmet. Always wear a snugly fitting but comfortable helmet approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The chin strap should buckle securely. Wearing a helmet can reduce head injuries by up to 95%.
- \* Know about the bike. Choose the right sized frame, handlebar, and seat heights. Understand



the gear system. Avoid plastic pedals, which can be slippery when wet

- \* Your gear. Consider wearing knee, wrist, and elbow pads to protect bones and joints when falling (you will fall). Avoid loose clothing and wear appropriate shoes. Use pant leg clips to keep grease off your clothing and out of the chain.
- \* When you fall. Maneuver yourself far away from other danger such as moving traffic. Ride in the direction of traffic. Be aware of surrounding traffic. Obey all rules of the road (bikes are vehicles too).



{Note: Many topics like the one on this page are contained in a medical self-care guide, such as Healthier at Home®, Health at Home®, and HealthyLife® Self-Care Guide, and/or addressed by a nurse advice line. They serve as excellent resources. If you have a self-care guide and/or access to a nurse advice line, use it whenever you are unsure about what to do for symptoms and health issues you are experiencing. They can help you make better decisions about when to seek professional assistance and when you can treat yourself at home using self-care.}



## Oh, my aching . . .

Take care of sprains, strains, and joint injuries with the tried-and-true first aid technique called R.I.C.E. Sports medicine experts at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital recommend the following:

- \* **Rest:** If you are injured during any activity, stop the activity immediately and rest the injured area. Do not try to work through the pain.
- \* **Ice:** For the first 24 to 48 hours apply ice packs to the injured area every 2 hours for 15 minutes. Make sure that the ice is not in direct contact with the skin.
- \* **Compress:** Bandage the area firmly, extending the wrapping above and below the injury. This pressure will stop any bleeding and reduce any swelling in the injured area.
- \* **Elevate:** Whenever possible, lift the injured area above the level of your heart. Elevation and compression are typically used for acute injuries such as a twisted ankle.

Once an injury has occurred, you should always consult a doctor with any concerns.



## Help overweight kids get healthy

“Being physically active every day is especially crucial for children struggling with weight issues,” says San Diego State University Exercise and Nutritional Sciences professor David Kahan. “Overweight and obese youth carry social, psychological, and emotional burdens that often lead to anger, despair, and ultimately, a sedentary lifestyle. Our goal is to help youth love physical activity.” Kahan is the author of the book *Supersized P.E.*

The book’s recommendations include these top 10 ways to help parents and teachers get overweight kids back on track:

- \* **Set an example.** Be a good role model of overall wellness.
- \* **Emphasize a child’s strengths.** If it’s something they enjoy or are good at, they are much more likely to do it.
- \* **Foster a positive atmosphere.** Aim for one that feels safe and inviting, is free of sarcasm, insults, and harassment and is a consistent source of comfort and encouragement.



- \* **Focus on behaviors, not outcomes.** Help them control behaviors and focus on how to change, not the results of changing.
- \* **Face the facts.** Denial is dangerous. Parents and teachers need to acknowledge when a student seems to be gaining weight or is overweight.
- \* **Develop a social support network.** Find a social niche where an overweight child is with others who share the same positive attitudes toward physical activity and health or at least support the child’s needs and intentions.
- \* **Avoid the spotlight.** Overweight children should not be placed in situations in which their physical performance is on display for all to see and critique. It is better to offer physical activity settings in which the overweight child can blend in and work at his or her own pace/level.
- \* **Get a doctor’s advice.** Physical education programs that report a child’s body mass index (BMI) may inadvertently trigger parental overreaction and undue stress on an overweight child. Parents should consider having their overweight child assessed by his or her pediatrician before undertaking an intervention.
- \* **Nutrition is key.** Educate young people how to make smart food choices. Teach overweight children about serving sizes, how to select low-fat snacks and how to recognize when they are full.
- \* **The numbers tell the story.** Children spend an average of 3.47 hours a day at the computer, watching TV, and playing video games. For a 100-pound child, this burns only 166 calories. Contrast this with calories spent during the same amount of time swimming (666), walking the dog briskly (687), playing half-court basketball (937), or hiking (957).



# HEALTHY EATING

## Foods that make drugs work differently

You probably know that some drugs interfere with the action of other drugs. Some foods can also cause medications to work less effectively or make them stronger. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) gives these examples of common foods that can affect how your drugs work.



*Talk with your doctor or pharmacist if you take medication for these conditions. This article does not mention the specific medication names, but you may read more at [www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/UCM096386](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/UCM096386).*

**Alcohol:** If you are taking any sort of medication, ask your doctor if you should limit or avoid alcohol, which can increase or decrease the effect of many drugs.

**Grapefruit juice:** Grapefruit juice is often mentioned as a product that can cause harmful food and drug interactions. But the actual number of drugs the juice can interact with is less well-known. Grapefruit juice shouldn't be taken with certain blood pressure-lowering drugs or drugs that prevent organ transplant rejection. That's because grapefruit juice can cause higher levels of those medicines in your body, making it more likely that you will have side effects from the medicine. The juice can also cause higher blood levels of some anti-anxiety medicines; anti-malarial drugs; and a medication used to treat insomnia.

**Licorice:** This would appear to be a fairly harmless snack food. However, for someone taking drugs for congestive heart failure and abnormal heart rhythms, licorice may increase the strength and become dangerous to your health. Licorice may also reduce the effects of blood pressure drugs or diuretics (water pills).

**Chocolate:** MAO inhibitors for depression are just one type of drug that shouldn't be consumed with excessive amounts of chocolate. Also, the caffeine in chocolate can increase the effect of stimulant drugs sometimes taken to treat hyperactivity. Caffeine can also decrease the effect of sedatives used for sleep.



## Are you getting enough grain?

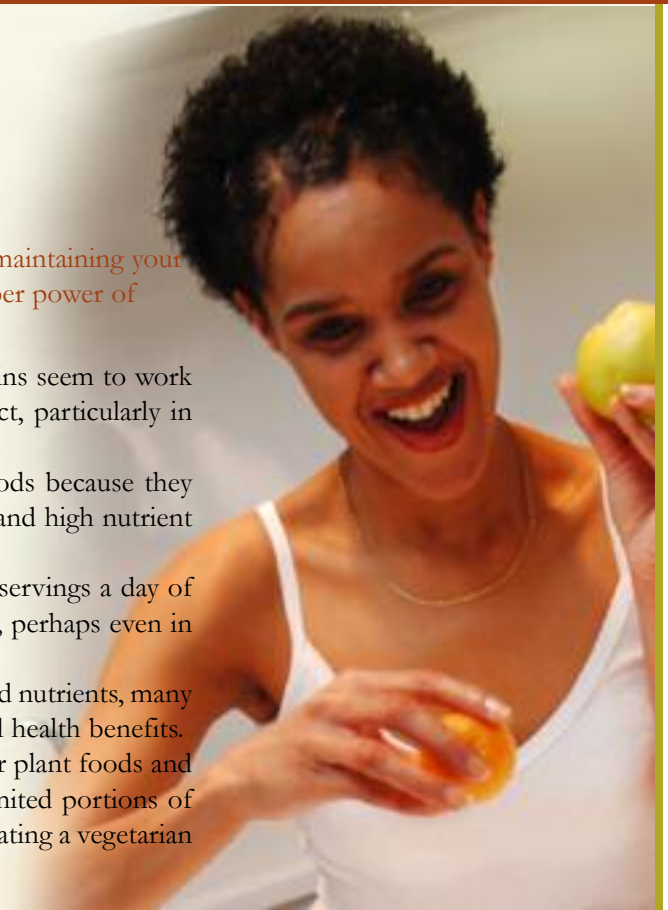
The USDA MyPyramid recommends that at least half of the grains you eat daily should be whole grain. That's at least 3 servings. Yet Americans still aren't getting enough whole grains. Getting your servings may be a little easier thanks to Ultragrain White Whole Wheat Flour. The new Eagle Mills 100% Ultragrain White Whole Wheat Flour is available at select grocery stores nationwide. You can easily replace a portion of your refined flour in recipes ranging from cookies, biscuits, and rolls to crispy-baked chicken. The product delivers 30 grams of whole grains per serving. It has more than 4 times the fiber of refined white flours. And the flour performs well when blended with refined flour.



# 5 foods that can help you lose weight

Which healthy food habits will give you the edge in weight loss or in maintaining your best weight? Registered dietitian Elaine Magee, MPH, explains the super power of foods in her book *Food Synergy*. She says these 5 foods can help:

- \* Switch to whole grains: The different nutritional parts in whole grains seem to work together. New research suggests grains can have a slimming effect, particularly in women.
- \* Strive for at least 5: Fruits and vegetables are great weight loss foods because they generally have low energy density (low in calories for its volume) and high nutrient density (high amounts of nutrients for its volume).
- \* Low-fat dairy to the rescue: A healthful diet that includes a couple servings a day of low-fat or non-fat dairy might have a connection to losing weight, perhaps even in the dreaded midsection.
- \* It's time to get green: Green tea contains an assortment of plant-based nutrients, many of which may be working together in the body to bring wonderful health benefits.
- \* Become a part-time vegetarian: Consider that you're eating high fiber plant foods and reducing the amount of higher fat red meat. You can enjoy unlimited portions of fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains. And studies on people eating a vegetarian diet report an average weight loss of 1 pound per week.



## Featured Recipe: Watermelon, Black Bean and Corn Salsa

This yummy salsa can also be a great side dish.

Extend it even further by serving it over shredded iceberg lettuce.

### Ingredients:

- 2 cans corn kernels, rinsed and drained (or fresh from your garden)
- 2 cans black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 purple onion, chopped
- 2 jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons mild chili powder
- Juice from 2 fresh limes
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- Salt to taste
- 3 cups chopped seedless watermelon

Mix together all ingredients, except watermelon, until well combined. Gently fold in watermelon. Chill. Serves 12 to 18. Using nutrient analysis software to calculate 18 servings, one serving has 239 calories per serving, 4.1 g fat, 133 mg sodium, 40 g carbs, 8 g fiber.

*With permission from Elaine Magee, MPH, RD, "The Recipe Doctor," at [www.recipe-doctor.com](http://www.recipe-doctor.com), author of *Food Synergy*. Join the free Recipe Doctor Club.*



# HEALTH TIPS

## The condition most Americans don't want to talk about

While it might not be surprising to learn that most Americans are not comfortable talking about constipation, the results of a new survey show just how uncomfortable discussing the topic really is.

While more than half of adults surveyed suffer from occasional constipation, the vast majority of them would rather avoid discussing it, which often keeps them from getting relief. If constipation lasts for more than a week, it may be a sign of something more serious.

The survey was conducted by Russell Research for Purdue Products, makers of constipation medications.

According to the survey, 66% of females and 51% of males report having constipation at some point. But, despite these high numbers, 77% of people surveyed would rather talk about religion, 72% cite politics, and 58% said they'd rather discuss sex than constipation.

Constipation can be caused by everyday stress, travel, overall poor eating habits, certain prescription drugs, and lack of exercise. Options to relieve the discomfort (and embarrassment) include eating more fiber, drinking more water, taking over-the-counter laxatives, and discussing the condition with your doctor.



## Walk safely

A walk in the country may be relaxing, but drivers on rural roads are not used to seeing walkers. So take these precautions:

- \* Always walk facing oncoming traffic.
- \* Look for a smooth, stable surface alongside the road. (Walk behind guardrails if the surface is smooth and flat.)
- \* If you need to walk on a paved shoulder, stay as far away from traffic as possible.
- \* Watch for bridges and narrow shoulders.
- \* Wear brightly colored clothing and wear reflective material on your jacket and shoes if you walk at dusk or dawn. (Carry a flashlight, too.)
- \* Take along a cell phone and ID, especially if walking alone.

*Source: Your Everyday Guide to Exercise & Physical Activity, National Institute on Aging*



## Seasonal Flu Shot: Is it for you?

In short, yes.

Seasonal flu shot vaccines are designed to protect us against strains of the flu virus expected over the season. The vaccine — available in the form of a flu shot or a nasal spray — offers protection against the flu. .

If you haven't gotten your shot yet, think about getting one soon. Vaccine shots are normally available between September and mid-November. Because it takes approximately two weeks for the vaccine to help build immunity in your system, getting the shot earlier rather than later is recommended.

### The CDC recommends getting the shot every year if you are:

- \* Age 6 months up to 19 years
- \* Pregnant
- \* 50 years old or older
- \* Have a chronic medical condition such as asthma, diabetes, or heart, kidney or lung disease
- \* Have a weakened immune system such as from medications or HIV infection
- \* Are a resident of a nursing home or other long term care facility
- \* Are a child care or health care worker or live with or care for someone at high risk of flu complications

The only individuals not recommended to get the shot include those who have had an allergic reaction to the vaccine in the past, people allergic to chicken eggs, individuals who currently have a fever or individuals who have developed Guillain-Barre syndrome after receiving the vaccine in the past.

### Groups recommended to receive the H1N1 flu vaccine include:

- \* Pregnant women
- \* Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age
- \* Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- \* All people from 6 months through 24 years of age
- \* Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza



### What Other Flu Prevention and Symptom Reduction Measures Are There?

- \* Practice good hygiene: Wash your hands; avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth; cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and avoid sick people. (On average the flu virus can live on a surface from a few seconds to 48 hours.) Keep toothbrushes of sick individuals away from other toothbrushes because even a slight touch of the two could spread the virus.
- \* Rest
- \* Drink plenty of fluids
- \* Take acetaminophen such as Tylenol
- \* Antivirals: Antivirals help to prevent the flu or reduce the severity and duration of the illness by a day or two. Antiviral medications are best taken within 48 hours of the onset of your symptoms and are available only by prescription. Zanamivir (Relenza) and Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) are two of the recommended antivirals.
- \* Clean: The CDC recommends 1/4 cup chlorine bleach in 1 gallon cool water as a disinfectant. Use this in kitchen, bathroom and other non-porous surfaces such as doorknobs and computer areas. Remember to disinfect floors if you have young children crawling around. Wash your kitchen sponge daily.



Copyright 2009, American Institute  
for Preventive Medicine.  
30445 Northwestern Hwy., Ste. 350,  
Farmington Hills, MI 48334  
248.539.1800 • [aipm@healthylife.com](mailto:aipm@healthylife.com)  
[www.HealthyLife.com](http://www.HealthyLife.com)  
All rights reserved.



## FREE Seasonal Flu Shots available for Faculty, Staff and Students through the Student Health Center



Visit

<http://www.american.edu/ocl/healthcenter/index.cfm>  
for more information and to schedule your flu shot.



For information regarding AU's preparedness for the H1N1 virus please visit <http://american.edu/emergency/H1N1-Flu-Information.cfm>



### AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION HEART WALK

#### Help Team AU win the College Cup!

Compete against GW,  
Georgetown, UDC, Catholic, and  
George Mason to raise the most  
funds in support of the American  
Heart Association for this 3 mile  
walk on the National Mall  
(Saturday, November 14).

We're looking for 60+ teams of  
faculty & staff under Team AU.

#### Participating is easy!

To learn more about the  
American Heart Association,  
please visit [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org). To  
download a registration form,  
visit

[www.american.edu/hr/walktober.cfm](http://www.american.edu/hr/walktober.cfm)

**All registrants will be entered  
into a drawing for a  
complimentary 15 minute  
seated massage.**

## Upcoming A healthy U Events

A *healthy U* has several new and returning programs available for faculty and staff this Fall. Check out the list below to see what we have in store:

**Walktober** - 6 week physical activity challenge during the month of October. Log your steps or minutes of activity on-line. You'll have the chance to participate as an individual or with a team. Either way, you'll receive incentives for exercise consistency! Registration runs September 17-30.

Join us for the Walktober Kick-off Event  
Tuesday, September 29 | 10:00 - 2:00 PM | MGC 200  
Walktober begins October 1!  
<http://www.american.edu/hr/Walktober.cfm>

**Germ Machine** - Do you think that your hands are clean? Put them to the test. The germs on your hands glow in the Germ Machine. See how clean - or dirty - your hands really are.  
Wednesday, October 7 | 11:00 - 4:00 PM | On the Quad next to the AU Farmers' Market

**Weight Watchers at Work** - Research shows that people who attend Weight Watchers meetings lose three times more weight than people who attempt to lose weight on their own. Interested? Email [ahealthyu@american.edu](mailto:ahealthyu@american.edu) for information about how to join the program at anytime.  
12 week program begins Tuesday, September 22 | 1:00 - 1:45 PM  
Cost: \$168 (payment options available) | \$65 reward available (details online)  
<https://cms.american.edu/hr/Weight-Watchers.cfm>

**Personal Training and Yoga Classes** - Experience personal training in an individual or small group setting (approx. 4 - 6 people). Also sign up for yoga and other exercise classes. Ask about registration for both members and nonmembers at Jacobs Fitness Center.  
Sessions currently underway | Contact JFC to learn more about upcoming sessions

**Seated Massage** - Relieve tension with a 15 or 30 minute chair massage. Services provided by licensed massage therapist. Book your appt. at [www.infinitemassage.com](http://www.infinitemassage.com).  
Monday, October 12 & Monday, October 26 | 11:00 - 2:15 PM | McKinley 153  
Cost: \$15/15 min. or \$30/30 min.

**Brown Bag Wellness Workshop: A Good Night's Sleep** - Join Nurse Mary with the Sibley Memorial Hospital Sleep Center for a conversation about the importance of getting a good night's sleep. Learn about sleep disorders and techniques on how to sleep more soundly. Light lunch provided. Workshop is FREE, but limited to the first 30 registrants. Please RSVP ([ahealthyu@american.edu](mailto:ahealthyu@american.edu)) by Monday, November 16.  
Wednesday, November 18 | 12:15 - 1:00 PM | MGC 247

For more info on any of these programs, visit <http://american.edu/hr/wellness.cfm>