

# Rediscover Play

**All work and no recess can make life pretty dull.** When is the last time you did something for the fun of it? Maybe you're so focused on work and family demands, you forget to set aside time for play.

**When you do find some leisure, how do you spend it?** Recent studies show that adults have a lot to gain from playing.

**Throughout life, maintaining a sense of fun, laughter and creativity is linked with the ability to feel happy.** And maintaining that attitude will help boost your resilience and good health. Specifically, play and humor can relieve stress and boost energy, help solve problems and improve relationships — on and off work.

**Play is finding amusement, humor, joy and entertainment in your daily life.** Enjoy play and fun in personal ways and those you live with — whatever boosts your mood and makes you smile and laugh.

## You might:

- Explore a favorite famous locale online.
- Listen to music or learn to play an instrument.
- Get outdoors (observe social distancing and other protective measures if they're in effect).
- Camp in your backyard with your kids.
- Enjoy humorous movies and books.

**Resolve to make play part of every day.**  
And make life easier.



“We cannot teach people anything; we can only help them discover it within themselves.”

— Galileo Galilei

## BEST bits

■ **To stay healthy, act to prevent the spread of viruses and other infectious germs:**

1. **Wash** your hands thoroughly in soapy water for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water aren't available.
2. **Cough** and sneeze into the inside of your elbow.
3. **Don't** touch the T-zone — your eyes, nose and mouth — with your hands.
4. **If** you're ill or have a weakened immune system, isolate yourself as much as possible.
5. **Follow** public health recommendations for wearing a mask and other safety measures.

■ **In these ever-changing times, try progressive muscle relaxation to ease body and mind.** While lying down or sitting in a comfortable chair, tighten each muscle group in your body one at a time; hold for 10 seconds and then slowly release. Start with your feet and ankles, move up to your lower legs and thighs, and then reach your abdominals, arms, shoulders and face.

■ **If you long to be tobacco free, why not start now?** Meet with your health care provider. Nicotine addiction is a chronic illness, and your provider can guide you through quitting. Ask about non-nicotine medicine and nicotine replacement aids to reduce nicotine cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Learn more at [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov).

**Note:** Due to production lead time, this issue may not reflect the current COVID-19 situation in some or all regions of the U.S. For the most up-to-date information visit [coronavirus.gov](http://coronavirus.gov).



# Gastroenteritis



**Gastroenteritis is a common, and sometimes miserable, stomach infection.** It involves inflammation of the intestines, which causes a host of unpleasant symptoms, including cramps, nausea, watery diarrhea, vomiting, lack of appetite and fever.

**There are 2 main types of gastroenteritis:**

**1. Viral gastroenteritis:** Several viruses can cause the infection, but norovirus is the most common, resulting in 19 to 21 million cases of viral gastroenteritis each year.

**The disease spreads easily** from one person to another on unwashed hands, or from close contact with someone who has the infection: for example, sharing food at a picnic. Viral gastroenteritis often spreads when people live or interact in close quarters, such as in college dorms, nursing homes or on cruise ships.

**2. Bacterial gastroenteritis:** The bacteria (such as *E. coli* and salmonella) that cause this form of the disease can infect food. **For example, bacterial pathogens can multiply on foods** that need refrigeration and are left outside too long in hot weather at a cookout. Or, if meat or poultry has come into contact with the bacteria and isn't cooked thoroughly enough, the pathogens can multiply and infect people who eat the contaminated food. Bacterial gastroenteritis also results from unsanitary food preparation, such as using unclean cutting boards and utensils.

## Treating Gastroenteritis

**Most cases of mild gastroenteritis resolve in a few days.** In the meantime, it's important to get plenty of rest and stay hydrated. If you don't improve fairly quickly, call your health care provider, who may recommend over-the-counter anti-diarrhea medicine.

**Drink water, sports drinks, broth and soft drinks,** taking small sips at a time if you have ongoing nausea. Once your upset stomach feels better and hunger returns, try eating broth, gelatin and clear soups and, as symptoms lessen, gradually add rice and other bland foods until symptoms are gone.

**If your symptoms include a fever higher than 101°F,** extreme fatigue, unrelenting vomiting or blood in your bowel movements, call your provider immediately or seek urgent care. And don't hesitate to seek medical care for a child or an elder who has gastroenteritis symptoms and appears dehydrated, weak and has a high fever.



# Immunization Saves Lives

**Making sure your child is up-to-date on immunizations gives them a head start on their health and their entire life.** Despite inaccurate and misleading information that often pops up online, vaccines have a proven track record for safety. From babyhood through old age, vaccines are effective protection from serious diseases — preventing lost school days as well as potential disabilities and even deaths.

**The chances of your child** getting measles, pertussis or other vaccine-preventable diseases tend to be statistically low, according to the CDC, and that's because vaccines work and have reduced the rate of these illnesses.

**Your child cannot get by without the protection immunization offers if he or she has been exposed to a vaccine-preventable illness.**

**What's more,** by making sure your child is vaccinated, you are not only protecting your youngster, but helping stop the spread of diseases to other kids, families and communities.

**August is Immunization Awareness Month,** a good time to consult with your child's health care provider if you have questions about vaccines. The CDC also provides information about vaccines, including the recommended immunization schedule for infancy through age 18 at [cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/visit/birth-6-vaccine-schedule.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/visit/birth-6-vaccine-schedule.html).



# Manage Your Digital Life

**Technology is an integral part of the 21st century, but it has a downside.**

If you don't balance your digital activities with the rest of your life, you may end up with little free time for family and friends, as well as exercise and other good health habits.



**Commit to not checking your phone compulsively day and night.** This can save you time and may improve your concentration, according to Georgetown University computer science professor Calvin Newport, PhD. Turn off your phone and tablet (and ask your partner and kids to do the same) while you have meals together and focus on conversation.

**Movies, sports and other entertainment are available with a click.** But concentrating on online diversions can keep you from enjoying the outdoors in the real world (depending on social distancing guidelines). Use technology to find and plan activities, including ways to be physically active, and enjoy time with friends and family.

**Social media and online groups can help you connect with colleagues, neighbors and the world.** But do you need all these groups, social feeds and online friends? Do a reality check and purge your feeds of groups and virtual friends who don't inform, inspire and benefit your life.



By Jamie Lynn Byram, MBA, AFC, MS

Flexible spending accounts allow employees to fund qualified medical expenses pretax

through salary reduction to pay for out-of-pocket expenses for medical, dental, vision and dependent care (your plan may vary). You can use your FSA to pay for eligible expenses incurred by your spouse or dependents claimed on your tax return even if they are not covered by your health plan.

The maximum annual allocation limits may change annually.

The total election amount is available on day 1 of your plan year. After enrollment, your funds are withdrawn automatically from each paycheck for deposit into your account before taxes. You can use FSA funds during the plan year. Many employers allow a 2½-month carryover into the next year or a \$500 carryover into the next plan year. Check with your employer to see which rules apply.

TIP of the MONTH No-Cook Meals

Summer is the best time for no-cook meals, such as salads. Chop up a beautiful array of fresh vegetables and herbs, and heap them atop leafy greens. You can turn salad into a full meal by adding canned lentils, chickpeas or tuna; leftover cooked chicken; or some cheese cubes. Add some whole-grain crackers on the side (or use them as croutons) and dinner is done.



Smart Eating Strategies

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

There is plenty of nutrition information out there, and sometimes it's difficult to know which advice to follow. So, if you're looking for simple guidance, consider these your ABCDs of healthy eating.

Always choose whole foods first. A whole food is one that's still close to how it was grown or raised, such as vegetables, fruit, beans, nuts, fish, meat, poultry, eggs, dairy and whole grains. Choose these more often than ultra-processed foods, such as candy, fries, chocolate, pastries and salty snacks.



Beverages count, too. The No. 1 source of sugar in the North American diet is sweet beverages such as soft drinks. Each 12-ounce can contains about 10 teaspoons of added sugar, and the World Health Organization recommends consuming no more than 12 teaspoons per day. Opt for water most often, or choose coffee and tea drinks without lots of cream and sugar.

Consider your hunger level. When you're distracted by screens, traffic or meetings, you may eat when you're not hungry. That may lead to overeating and cause upset stomach, heartburn, bloating or weight gain. Learn to focus on how hungry you feel. Rate it on a scale of 1 to 10. Eat until you feel just full, but not stuffed. If you're not distracted, it's easier to monitor fullness cues.

Divide your plate. When you plan meals and snacks, fill half your plate with vegetables and fruit, a quarter with whole grains, and the remaining quarter with protein options, such as fish, poultry or legumes. This balanced plan provides the nutrients your body needs.



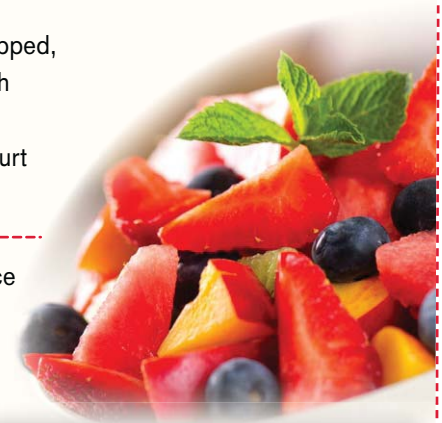
Summer Fruit Salad with Fresh Herbs

EASY recipe

- 3 peaches or nectarines, sliced
2 cups mixed berries (blueberries, strawberries and blackberries)
2 tbsp fresh basil, cut into thin strips
2 tbsp fresh mint, chopped, plus more for garnish
1/2 lime, zest and juice
1 cup plain Greek yogurt
2 tsp honey

In a serving bowl, gently blend fruit with basil, mint, lime juice and zest. In a small bowl, blend Greek yogurt with honey.

Divide fruit salad evenly onto 4 plates. Top each with a dollop of honey yogurt, and garnish with mint. Serve.



Serves 4. Per serving:

108 calories | 4g protein | 1g total fat | 0.5g saturated fat | 0.5g mono fat | 0g poly fat | 24g carbohydrate | 16g sugar | 4g fiber | 60mg sodium

## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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## EXPERT advice — Eric Endlich, PhD

**Q:** How can I adapt to rapid change?

**A:** Here are some helpful tips if you're struggling to keep up with a fast-moving world:

1. Realize that you'll need to adjust. In the long run, facing change is better for you than ignoring the situation. Give yourself time to adapt.
2. Remember: Good changes may be stressful, but they're still positive events.
3. Maintain regular routines when possible to provide some stability.
4. Keep up healthy habits: exercise, adequate sleep, relaxation and wholesome eating.
5. Take a break from the news.
6. Avoid relying on drugs, alcohol or tobacco.
7. Confide in others to feel less isolated.
8. Find things to be thankful for. Look for positive opportunities.
9. Address changes proactively. Before a hectic workweek, cook make-ahead meals and finish chores on the weekend.
10. Trust that you can persevere and tackle changes constructively, as you have in the past. Keep moving forward one step at a time.

## 10 DIY Dos & Don'ts

Many of us like to think that we are skilled do-it-yourselfers (DIYers), equipped to tackle such tasks as cleaning out gutters from two stories up or managing power tools. But even expert DIYers need to follow the rules of safety. Before you start your next project, review these important dos and don'ts:

- ✓ **Do** wear appropriate protective gear such as safety glasses, work gloves and ear protection.
- ✓ **Do** inspect your tools for wear, loose parts or damage before use.
- ✓ **Do** keep your tools maintained and clean.
- ✓ **Do** check wires with a noncontact voltage tester before touching them. Electric shocks can be fatal.
- ✓ **Do** make sure you set your ladder on a flat surface and check rungs before climbing. Keep metal ladders away from electrical lines and always use three points of contact while on a ladder.
- ✓ **Don't** forget to read and follow all power tool directions before operating them.
- ✓ **Don't** use makeshift scaffolding — that can only result in disaster. Instead, use an appropriate ladder size for the job. If you don't have one, rent or borrow one.
- ✓ **Don't** leave anything — paint buckets or tools — on top of a ladder.
- ✓ **Don't** use a nail gun on bump or automatic trigger as it can result in unintended nail discharge. Instead, use full sequential trigger nail guns. Caution: Never point a nail gun at anyone.
- ✓ **Don't** paint or stain in a poorly ventilated area. Instead, make sure you are outside or near open windows with plenty of ventilation. Always use a respirator with organic vapor cartridges if using spray or oil-based paints.



**DR. ZORBA'S corner** **Weight problem?** You're not alone. Data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey shows that four out of 10 adults are overweight while one out of 10 is severely overweight. That's jumped dramatically since the 70s and 80s. Just look at old group photos — being overweight was unusual; now it's common. What to do? Start with **hidden calories**. Three tablespoons of ranch dressing is about 200 calories — that's as many calories as a chocolate bar. Light dressing has half as much. And don't get me started on regular soft drinks — a 12-ounce can has about 12 cubes' worth of sugar. Want to lose weight? Cut out all sugary drinks and check the small stuff such as salad dressing. Calories count. **Note:** Cutting calories is just one step and obesity can result from many factors. Ask your health care provider to help you come up with a plan to lose weight safely and keep it off. — Zorba Paster, MD