



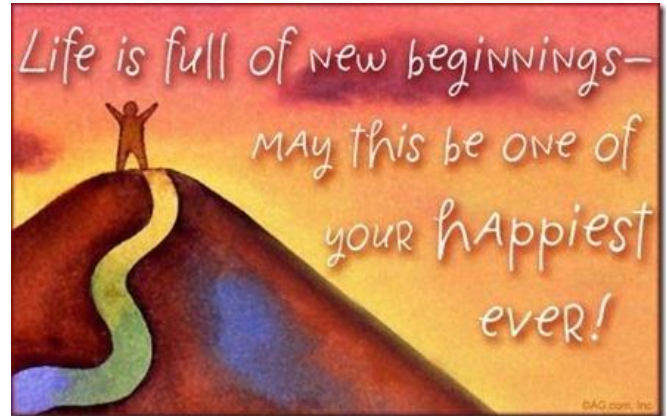
## *In the News*

From [www.nbcnews.com/business-news](http://www.nbcnews.com/business-news)

### **Pepsi to Cut Sugar and Calories in Drinks in Drive to Tackle Obesity**

PepsiCo has set a target for reducing the amount of sugar in its soft drinks around the world as part of a campaign aimed at tackling obesity. The company said that by 2025 at least two thirds of its drinks will have 100 calories or fewer from added sugar per 12 oz serving. The move, which it plans to achieve by introducing more zero and low-calorie drinks and reformulating existing drinks, comes as PepsiCo and rival Coca-Cola come under increasing pressure from health experts and governments who blame them for fueling epidemics of obesity and diabetes.

The World Health Organization this month recommended taxes on sugary drinks, as France and Mexico have done, to curb consumption and improve health. The soft drinks industry opposes such taxes. ■



*The JFK for Life Staff wishes all our patients and their families a most wonderful, healthy and happy New Year!*



## Setting Weight Loss Goals

### *Is BMI always a good tool to determine healthy weight goals?*

Body mass index (BMI) is a measure of body fat based on your weight in relation to your height. It is calculated by dividing an individual's weight in kilograms by the square of height in meters. It is used as a screening tool to identify whether an adult is at a healthy weight. And although it doesn't measure it directly, BMI is a good indicator of a person's body fat. If a person's BMI is out of the healthy range, their health risks may increase significantly.

Calculating your BMI is a good starting point when setting your weight loss goals. However, it does have its limitations. BMI does not take into account body composition, age or muscle mass.

### *What other tools may be helpful?*

#### **Waist circumference**

Waist circumference can provide useful information. Excessive fat tissue located in the abdomen is considered harmful. An optimal waist circumference should be below 35 inches in women and 40 inches in men. Higher values can contribute to Metabolic Syndrome.

#### **Hip to waist ratio**

When the circumference of the waist is divided by the circumference of the hips, a ratio will result. A ratio of less than 0.9 for men and less than 0.8 for women is considered healthy. Higher ratios predispose to many cardiac and metabolic diseases.

#### **Body fat and body composition measurements**

Skin calipers that measure skin folds can help determine body fat content and the need for weight loss. More complex measures can also be

achieved by machines that determine body composition (lean tissue, water, and musculature).

#### **Other factors to consider**

Resolution of co-morbid conditions:

- Type2 Diabetes
- High Blood Pressure
- High Cholesterol
- Chronic Pain
- Sleep Apnea

Quality of life improves with weight loss

- More energy
- No need for seat belt extender
- Can play on floor with kids
- Can tie shoes without effort
- Clothes fit and look better

Weight loss goals should not be exclusively determined by a number on a scale or on a chart. Think of your goals in terms of health habits gained and positive lifestyle choices. ■

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#### **Overheard at Support Group . . .**

*"I used to have a handful of pills, now I have a handful of vitamins!"*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS



**JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>**

**January 11<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>**

SUPPORT GROUP  
6:30PM

**January 16<sup>th</sup>** – Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday

**January 17<sup>th</sup>**

NEW PATIENT SEMINAR  
7PM  
Call 732-744-5955 to register

**January 20<sup>th</sup>**



**FEBRUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>**

SUPER BOWL SUNDAY



**FEBRUARY 8<sup>TH</sup> AND 16<sup>TH</sup>**

SUPPORT GROUP  
6:30PM

**FEBRUARY 14<sup>TH</sup>**

VALENTINE'S DAY



**February 21<sup>st</sup>**

NEW PATIENT SEMINAR  
7PM  
Call 732-744-5955 to register

**MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup> AND 16<sup>TH</sup>**

SUPPORT GROUP  
6:30PM

**March 15<sup>th</sup>**

NEW PATIENT SEMINAR  
7PM  
Call 732-744-5955 to register

## *New Year's Resolutions That You Can Keep*

If done mindfully, these changes can have dramatic ripple effects on your health, and happiness

**Smile more.** It is well known among social psychologists now that the simple act of smiling can make you happier and healthier, even if your smile is a forced one—so practice more in 2016!

**Eliminate the scale.** Avoid stepping on a scale, because that number tells you nothing about your health or your happiness.

**Schedule personal time.** Many of us are used to scheduling, but for some reason only seem to do so in the context of work (e.g., meetings, project deadlines, etc.). However, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that the most productive people are not actually the busiest but rather those who prioritize their free time—for personal passions, for family, for activities completely unrelated to their jobs.

**Be grateful.** Cultivate more gratitude towards your body and the ways in which it gets you through the day (hello, lungs! thank you for breathing!)

**Positive Affirmations.** When you catch yourself saying negative things about your body, counteract them with positive messages.

**Accept compliments.** When someone compliments you, instead of deflecting the comment (“Psssh, I’m having a terrible hair day!”), just say, “Thank you.”

**And finally.** Remember that your body is a vessel that carries you through this life — and that it deserves your care.



Congratulations to those who have just reached their 1<sup>st</sup> Surgi- versary!

**DW MS KB MV DP**  
**PG EF AB HB LP**  
**JB**

***They have lost a total of 839 lbs!***

Kudos to our **2 year** alumni

**RB SS GW LN FS PB**

***who have together maintained a weight loss of 400 lbs!!***

Bravo to our **3 and 4 year** alumni

**NT PM LG MP**

***who have together maintained a weight loss of 340 lbs!!***

**WAY TO GO!**

### *Food Trivia*

1. Which of the following vegetables is not one of the ingredients of V-8 juice?  
A. beet  
B. carrot  
C. spinach  
D. cabbage
2. Europeans first learned of chocolate from whom?  
A. Africans  
B. Aztecs  
C. East Indians
3. What vegetable has varieties known as Bell Tower, Orobelle, and Jupiter?  
A. Onion  
B. pepper  
C. squash
4. The fear of cooking is known as Mageirocophobia.  
A. True  
B. False
5. The fear of vegetables is called Lachanophobia.  
A. True  
B. False
6. Which of the following is NOT an added sugar?  
A. High fructose corn syrup  
B. Honey  
C. Maple Syrup  
D. Fructose
7. Zinc is a mineral that is often associated with better immune system performance. Which food contains zinc?  
A. Strawberries  
B. Prunes  
C. Oysters  
D. Oranges



## How Much Should I Exercise?

For most healthy adults, the Department of Health and Human Services recommends these exercise guidelines:

**Aerobic activity:** Get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity a week, or a combination of moderate and vigorous activity. The guidelines suggest that you spread out this exercise during the course of a week.

**Strength training:** Do strength training exercises for all major muscle groups at least two times a week. Aim to do a single set of each exercise, using a weight or resistance level heavy enough to tire your muscles after about 12 to 15 repetitions.

All of the following fit the “moderate” definition of exercise:

- Biking five miles in 30 minutes
- Swimming laps for 20 minutes
- Running one and a half miles in 15 minutes
- Doing water aerobics for 30 minutes
- Jumping rope for 15 minutes
- Walking 2 miles in 30 minutes

- Walking stairs for 15 minutes
- Washing your car for 45 minutes
- Gardening for 30 – 45 minutes
- Raking leaves for 30 minutes
- Dancing for 30 minutes

Want a simple way to tell if you’re in the moderate zone? Use the “talk test.” When exercising at moderate intensity, you should be able to talk to others without gasping for air. Speaking will take a little more effort than usual, but you should be able to carry on a conversation.

What matters most is that you get moving and find a routine you can stick with!

Remember to always consult your physician before you start any exercise program. ■



Although shoveling snow can count as moderate-to-heavy physical activity, shoveling, even pushing a heavy snow blower, can cause a sudden increase in blood pressure and heart rate, and the cold air can cause constriction of the blood vessels and decrease oxygen to the heart. All these work in concert to increase the work of the heart and trigger a potentially fatal heart attack.

Here's a list of people who should limit or avoid shoveling snow:

Anyone who has had a heart attack or heart disease.

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People with high blood pressure or high cholesterol.

Smokers.

Those who lead a sedentary lifestyle

Avoid shoveling immediately after you awaken as most heart attacks occur early in the morning when blood is more prone to clotting. Wait for at least 30 minutes and warm up do not eat a heavy meal before shoveling: blood gets diverted from the heart to the stomach Warm up your muscles before starting by walking for a few minutes or marching in place

### While Shoveling Snow

- Use a small shovel. Shovel many small loads instead of fewer heavy ones
- Begin slowly and take frequent, 15-minute breaks
- Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration
- Dress in layers, to avoid hypothermia (low body temperature) or overheating
- Cover your head and neck (50% body heat lost thru head and neck)
- Cover your mouth (breathing cold air can cause angina or trigger breathing problems)
- Watch for warning signs of a heart attack, lightheadedness, dizziness, being short of breath, or if you have tightness or burning in chest, neck, arms or back. **If you think you are having a heart attack, call 911.**



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[www.jfkforlife.org](http://www.jfkforlife.org)

**Check us out on our FACEBOOK page!**

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Answers to trivia questions:

1 D; 2B; 3B; 4A; 5A; 6D; 7B

*It's easier to stick with a weight loss plan when you have support, can share tips on diet and exercise and have an exercise buddy!*

## What is *Mindful Eating*?

Mindful eating is eating with *intention* and *attention*. It involves eating with the intention of caring for yourself, noticing and enjoying your food and its effects on your body.

Mindful eating is more than just eating slowly and without distraction. It encompasses the entire process of eating.

### **Principals of mindfulness:**

- Deliberately paying attention to the present moment
- Being aware of your thoughts, feelings and physical sensations without judgment
- Paying attention to internal and external cues in the moment they are occurring
- Learning to meet your other needs in more effective ways than eating

### **Mindful eating is:**

- Eating food in a way that promotes respect to your body
- Being in the moment while eating and acknowledging your personal likes and dislikes
- Becoming aware of physical hunger and satiety cues to guide your eating choices
- Selecting food that is satisfying to your and nourishing to your body
- Using the fuel you've consumed to live the vibrant life you crave.

### **Mindful Eating Strategies:**

- Take 5 deep breaths prior to each meal
- Sit down while eating
- Place your food on an attractive plate
- Eat slowly and taste each bite

- Take small bites
- Pay attention to satiety cues
- Once you begin to feel satisfied, stop eating
- Carry foods with you that you like and that support your health, in the event that you become hungry when you are out.

With practice, mindful eating can become an important tool for developing a healthier, happier relationship with food.

### **Resources about Mindful Eating:**

Am I Hungry?

<http://amihungry.com/programs/mindful-eating-for-bariatric-surgery/>

Am I Hungry? Virtual Coach App \$2.99

In the Moment – Mindful Eating App \$0.99

Mindful Meal Timer App – FREE

“The Mindful Diet: How to Transform Your Relationship with Food for Lasting Weight Loss and Vibrant Health” available on GOOGLE PLAY.

*From the desk of Karen Rose, LCSW ~*

**H**ow can you improve your bariatric surgery outcome? Starting with the basics of sound behavioral health is one of the important keys.

Research published in the Bariatric Times Journal notes poor mental health can lead to grazing, disordered eating and negative bariatric surgery outcomes.

Feelings of depression and anxiety both pre and post-surgery can lead to poor weight loss and predictors of weight regain.

Brief early intervention has evidenced improved outcome after surgery and lessening the risk of weight regain.

If you are experiencing feelings of depression, sadness, anxiety or general worry, speak with a mental health provider to support positive long term bariatric surgery outcome.

It is important to remember that it is a balance of what you are eating (food) and what is eating you (your emotions).

**Be kind to yourself!**



## **Holiday Blues**

For some people, an annual holiday tradition is the sense of sadness that comes with this time of year — a condition known as the “holiday blues.” The holidays can be filled with extra stress, unrealistic expectations and sentimental memories, but recognizing your feelings and taking proper care of yourself can go a long way toward feeling better.

### **Contributing Factors to the Holiday Blues**

- Less sunlight during the fall and winter
- Seasonal changes in diet or routines
- Increase in the number of events where alcohol is likely to be present
- Holiday-related stress

### **Symptoms of the Holiday Blues**

- Fatigue
- Frustration
- Loneliness and isolation
- Loss
- Sadness
- Tension

Holiday blues are different from mental illness, but short-term mental health problems must be taken seriously. They can lead to clinical anxiety and depression. People already living with mental illness may be affected by the holiday blues.

### **Avoiding the Holiday Blues**

- Spend time with people who are caring and supportive.
- Eat and drink in moderation. Alcohol is a depressant so it can exacerbate feelings of sadness.

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- Get some exercise, even just a walk around the block.
- Listen to music you find calming and soothing.
- Make a to-do list to help yourself organize your plans and priorities. However, it's important to be realistic, so keep it manageable.
- Set reasonable expectations and goals for holiday activities, such as shopping, sending cards, cooking and entertaining.
- Set a budget for holiday activities

Remember, the holidays will pass, and in many cases, so will your feelings of sadness. But if you're feeling depressed or anxious for more than two or three weeks, you may have a more serious mental health problem.

Speak with your doctor to get the care you need.

## Mental Health Resources

Union County, NJ - Mental Health Services

<http://ucnj.org/departments/human-services/mental-health-services/>

Bergen County, NJ - Mental Health Services

[www.co.bergen.nj.us/index.aspx?NID=559](http://www.co.bergen.nj.us/index.aspx?NID=559)

### HOTLINES -

NJ Hope

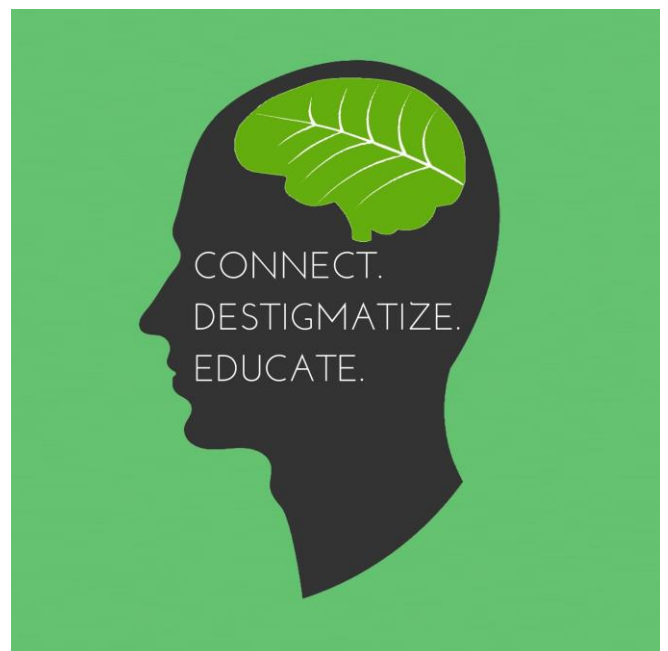
[www.njhonline.com](http://www.njhonline.com)

New Jersey Regional Crisis Hotlines

[www5.njit.edu/counseling/gethelp/crisis.php](http://www5.njit.edu/counseling/gethelp/crisis.php)

Suicide Prevention Lifeline

[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)



G C B O I M B Y C Z B K J S H O V E L I N G I  
 C O X U G I C G F E H Y Z P Y C E U M Q C S C  
 A H A L E C N E R E F M U C R I C S R J N S U  
 P C A L K Z B D R S M Q F L R W R J O C L S A  
 W F E P S F V N U N J L P O Y I F G I E G S M  
 N X R S E Z I V F O B M R S H X Y C T N B E L  
 G O O L E X E R C I S E I V I O M B A S E N U  
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 U P G M D M K O M E B E Q D X E Q G T U P I S  
 T A Z E L Q U A L I T Y Y Q N J G J X R P M T  
 T B W V L I V Q S W O S N S A W N Y I P Z Z P

Find the following words in the puzzle:

- AEROBICS
- BMI
- CIRCUMFERENCE
- EXERCISE
- GOALS
- HEALTHY
- MINDFULNESS
- QUALITY
- RATIO
- RESOLUTIONS
- SHOVELING
- WAIST

## Vitamin C: Can it Prevent Colds?

Popular belief is that vitamin C can cure the common cold. However, research about this claim is conflicting.

Although not fully proven, large doses of vitamin C may help reduce how long a cold lasts. They do not protect against getting a cold.

Vitamin C (also known as ascorbic acid) is abundant in vegetables and fruits. A water-soluble vitamin and powerful antioxidant, it helps the body form and maintain connective tissue, including bones, blood vessels, and skin.

Vitamin C helps to repair and regenerate tissues, protect against heart disease, aid in the absorption of iron, prevent scurvy, and decrease total and LDL ("bad") cholesterol and triglycerides. Research indicates that vitamin C may help protect against a variety of cancers by combating free radicals, and helping neutralize the effects of nitrites (preservatives found in some packaged foods that may raise the risk of certain forms of cancer). Supplemental vitamin C may also help delay or prevent cataracts, and support healthy immune function.

Vitamin C is easy to get through foods, as many fruits and vegetables contain vitamin C. Good sources include: apples, asparagus, berries, broccoli, cabbage, melon (cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon), cauliflower, citrus fruits (lemons, limes, oranges), kiwi, fortified foods (breads, grains, cereal), dark leafy greens (kale, spinach), peppers (especially red bell peppers, which have among the highest per-serving vitamin C content), potatoes, and tomatoes.

Adverse affects may occur between vitamin C and anticoagulant drugs such as warfarin (Coumadin), decreasing their action. Nicotine products, oral contraceptives/estrogens, tetracyclines, barbiturates, and aspirin may decrease levels of vitamin C.

## Tips for Avoiding Colds and Flu

**Get a flu shot.** It's the No. 1 thing you can do to prevent the flu.

**Wash your hands – a lot.** To completely get rid of viruses from your skin, you need to scrub hard for 20 seconds or more.

A good way to time yourself is to sing "Happy Birthday" twice while scrubbing the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails. It doesn't matter if the water's hot or cold – the very act of scrubbing will physically remove the germs.

**Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.** If you can't get to soap and water, sanitizer can kill cold and flu germs.

**Avoid getting close to people who are sick.** For example, don't shake hands.

**Keep your surroundings clean.** Sanitize doorknobs and light switches. Clean your work space daily with virus and germ killing soaps.

**Keep up a healthy lifestyle.** Get adequate rest, good nutrition and don't smoke.

Today's popular belief that vitamin C can treat the common cold originated from claims made by Linus Pauling (1901 – 1994), a physical chemist and peace activist who won two Nobel Prize awards; one in chemistry in 1954, followed by a Nobel Peace Prize in 1962. He is ranked as one of the 20 greatest scientists to ever live.

He detailed his discoveries in a series of books, starting with *Vitamin C and the Common Cold* in 1970, followed by *Vitamin C, the Common Cold and the Flu* (1976), *Vitamin C and Cancer* (1979), and *How to Feel Better and Live Longer* (1986).



## Chicken & Spinach Soup with Fresh Pesto

*Courtesy of eatingwell.com*

Total prep and cook time: 30 minutes

Serving size: 4 ounces

Nutrition:

15g protein, 5g total carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 3g Fat

### Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons plus 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1/2 cup carrot or diced red bell pepper
- 1 large boneless, skinless chicken breast (about 8 ounces), cut into quarters
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 5 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried marjoram
- 6 ounces baby spinach, coarsely chopped
- 1 15-ounce can cannellini beans or great northern beans, rinsed
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/3 cup lightly packed fresh basil leaves
- Freshly ground pepper to taste

### Directions

1. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add carrot (or bell pepper) and chicken; cook, turning the chicken and stirring frequently, until the chicken begins to

brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute more. Stir in broth and marjoram; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the chicken is cooked through, about 5 minutes.

2. With a slotted spoon, transfer the chicken pieces to a clean cutting board to cool. Add spinach and beans to the pot and bring to a gentle boil. Cook for 5 minutes to blend the flavors.

3. Combine the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, Parmesan and basil in a food processor (a mini processor works well). Process until a coarse paste forms, adding a little water and scraping down the sides as necessary.

4. Cut the chicken into bite-size pieces. Stir the chicken and pesto into the pot. Season with pepper. Heat until hot. Serve and enjoy!



***The following is from an article published in The Huffington Post, April 2015. The author is Zahra Barnes from the Daily Burn.***

## How Sleep Deprivation Can Lead to Weight Gain

Can't figure out why you are gaining weight? Why is it so difficult to erase those extra pounds? You might be suffering from sleep deprivation — even if you swear you're getting enough sleep at night. In fact, a study presented at this year's Endocrine Society national meeting suggests that getting just 30 fewer minutes sleep than you should per weekday can increase your risk of obesity and diabetes.

### **Sleep: Your Body's Best Friend**

"Sleep is important for pretty much every one of your physical systems," says Janet K. Kennedy, Ph.D., clinical psychologist and founder of NYC Sleep Doctor. "Sleep deprivation leads to deficits in cognitive functioning, whether it's reaction time, decision-making, or memory."

Sleep is essential for beyond just what's going on in your brain, too. "Sleep is involved in the repair and restoration of the body. The rest that happens during sleep really rejuvenates your body for the next day," says Kennedy.

Plus, you might be suffering from the symptoms of sleep deprivation, even if you think you're spending enough time in the sack. "We used to think you needed a significant amount of sleep deprivation for it to have an effect on weight. It turns out that's not true," says Michael Breus, Ph.D., a sleep specialist and author of *The Sleep Doctor's Diet Plan: Lose Weight Through Better Sleep*. Just 30 minutes of sleep loss could make you more likely to gain.

## Why Sleep Deprivation Causes Weight Gain

Losing out on sleep creates a vicious cycle in your body, making you more prone to various factors contributing to weight gain.

The more sleep-deprived you are, the higher your levels of the stress hormone cortisol, which increases your appetite," says Breus. And it's not like you're going to be suddenly ravenous for kale salads, either. "For me, it takes a bit of willpower to choose the salad over the sandwich," DePaolis says. "When I'm tired, I go for whatever's going to be easy and make me feel better in the moment."

Often, that means reaching for bad-for-you foods. "When you're stressed, your body tries to produce serotonin to calm you down. The easiest way to do that is by eating high-fat, high-carb foods that produce a neurochemical reaction," Breus says.

A lack of sleep also hinders your body's ability to process the sweet stuff. "When you're sleep deprived, the mitochondria in your cells that digest fuel start to shut down. Sugar remains in your blood, and you end up with high blood sugar," says Breus. Losing out on sleep can make fat cells 30 percent less able to deal with insulin, according to a study in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

When you're wiped out, your hormones go a little nuts, too, boosting levels of the ghrelin, which tells you when you're hungry, and decreasing leptin, which signals satiety. In fact, sleep-deprived participants in one small study of 30 people ate an average of 300 more calories per day, according to research in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. And a larger study of 225 people found that those who only spent four hours in bed for five consecutive nights gained almost two pounds more than those who were in bed for about 10 hours, over the course of a week.

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***"The more you eat, the less flavor; the less you eat, the more flavor."  
~ Chinese Proverb***

One reason you might pack on pounds when you're sleep deprived is because your body goes into survival mode. Sleeplessness can fool your body into thinking you're in danger. "Your metabolism slows because your body is trying to maintain its resources, and it also wants more fuel," says Breus. "I would argue that sleep is probably the most important thing a person can do if they're ready to start a diet and lose weight," says Breus.

### **How To End Your Cycle Of Sleep Deprivation**

"Sleeping isn't downtime. You're feeding your body just as you are when you eat."

Luckily, there are easy ways to make sure sleep never gets in between you and your goal weight again. First, figure out your bedtime. Count seven and a half hours before the time you need to wake up, says Breus. That's your "lights out" time, which should ensure you're getting enough sleep to make your body wake itself up at the proper time (maybe even before an alarm goes off). And keep that wake-up time consistent, Kennedy recommends. "Doing that and getting out of bed at the same time sets your body's clock so you'll be tired around the same time every night," she says.

If you feel like you're still having sleep issues, keep a sleep diary that you can take in to a doctor. "Try to really get a sense of what's going on day-to-day. Record what time you're going to bed, roughly what time you fall asleep, if you're waking up in the middle of the night, when you wake up in the morning, and what time you get out of bed," says Kennedy. Also make sure to jot down other sleep-related markers, like how you feel throughout the day, exercise, caffeine intake, alcohol and stress levels.

Most important of all, make sleep a priority. "It's physically unhealthy to lose sleep. And it's such an easy fix in theory," says Kennedy. "It requires both a behavioral and conceptual shift. Sleeping isn't downtime. You're feeding your body just as you are when you eat." ■

### **How Much Should My Daily Sodium Intake Be?**

The American Heart Association recommends no more than 2,300 milligrams (mgs) of sodium a day and **an ideal limit of no more than 1,500 mg per day**.

Because the average American's sodium intake is so excessive, even cutting back to no more than 2,400 milligrams a day will significantly improve blood pressure and heart health.

More than 75 percent of the sodium Americans eat comes from processed, prepackaged and restaurant foods – **not from the salt shaker**.

#### **Here are the approximate amounts of sodium in a given amount of table salt:**

1/4 teaspoon salt = 575 mg sodium

1/2 teaspoon salt = 1,150 mg sodium

3/4 teaspoon salt = 1,725 mg sodium

1 teaspoon salt = 2,300 mg sodium

#### **Did you know that on average, Americans eat more than 3,400 milligrams of sodium each day?**

Most of us are likely underestimating how much sodium we eat, if we can estimate it at all. The association surveyed 1,000 adults and found that one-third couldn't estimate how much sodium they ate, and another 54 percent thought they were eating less than 2,000 mg sodium a day.

#### **How can I tell how much sodium I'm eating?**

You can find the amount of sodium in your food by looking at the Nutrition Facts label. The amount of sodium per serving is listed in milligrams, abbreviated "mg." Check the ingredient list for words like sodium, salt and soda. The total sodium shown on the Nutrition Facts label includes the sodium from salt, plus the sodium from any other sodium-containing

ingredient in the product (for example, ingredients like sodium nitrate, sodium citrate, monosodium glutamate [MSG], or sodium benzoate).

Remember to take note of the serving size on the Nutrition Facts label. If your portion size equals two servings of a product, you're actually eating double the sodium listed.

**Here are sodium-related terms you may see on food packages:**

**Sodium-free** – Less than 5 milligrams of sodium per serving and contains no sodium chloride

**Very low sodium** – 35 milligrams or less per serving

**Low sodium** – 140 milligrams or less per serving

**Reduced (or less) sodium** – At least 25 percent less sodium per serving than the usual sodium level

**Light (for sodium-reduced products)** – If the food is “low calorie” and “low fat” and sodium is reduced by at least 50 percent per serving

**Light in sodium** – If sodium is reduced by at least 50 percent per serving

At the end of the day it's easy to tally how much sodium you consumed so you can make better choices as needed. Sometimes a small adjustment can bring big results when it comes to your health!

**Is there such a thing as eating too little sodium?**

The body needs only a small amount of sodium (less than 500 milligrams per day) to function properly. That's a mere smidgen — the amount in less than ¼ teaspoon. Practically no one in this country even comes close to eating less than that amount. Plus, healthy kidneys are great at retaining the sodium that our bodies need. ■

*From Obesity Help.com*

**Holiday Food Bombs to Avoid**

1. **Spinach Artichoke Dip** - Spinach and artichokes are healthy so what's a little dip to those two nutrition packed ingredients? Lots of calories with a great big side of fat grams. Most recipes for this holiday favorite include a combo of cream cheese, mayonnaise, sour cream and Parmesan cheese making this a holiday food bomb to avoid.

2. **Broccoli Casserole** - It is wrong to take a healthy ingredient, such as broccoli, and casserole it with full fat milk, full fat cheddar cheese, butter and flour. Pass up the casserole and go for the steamed broccoli.

3. **Crusted Sweet Potato** - In this holiday fave, recipes call for sugar, brown sugar, butter, marshmallows and pecans for a crust to top off the innocent sweet potato. Sweet potatoes have a natural sweetness. Why do we have to make this nutritional gem sweeter?

4. **Eggnog** - Even the non-alcohol version of eggnog is a bomb waiting to detonate on your hips and thighs. While it may be thought of as the drink of the holidays, when you mix up egg yolks, sugar, milk, heavy cream, and nutmeg, it is calorie bomb explosion that will last into the New Year. If that isn't enough to have you speed walking to the sparkling water, add in the empty calories of alcohol to this concoction and you have a double whammy.

5. **Fried Turkey** - As if fried Twinkies and Snickers aren't bad enough, we take the healthy lean protein of turkey and fry it up? Enough said.

6. **Cranberry Sauce** - Cranberries are a fruit so why not save space on your plate for them, right? Not if that cranberry sauce contains sugar, corn sweetener and other sugary additions, oh yeah and add cranberries to that sugar sauce.

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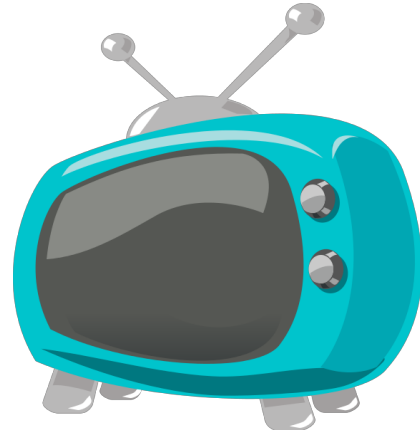
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7. **Vegetable Platter and Dip** - Fill up on those delicious vegetables on that platter but skip the dip. Most dips are nothing more than a base of fattening sour cream, mayonnaise (or both!) and seasonings.

8. **Green Bean Casserole** - The casserole part of this dish has green beans trapped in a creamy based soup sauce and add milk then choke them off with french fried onions on the top. Free the green bean by steaming them and top with slivered almonds.

9. **Turkey Gravy** - Turkey gravy doesn't have to be a holiday food bomb but most times it is. Homemade turkey gravy is a pool of the fatty parts of your turkey, butter, meat fat and flour with herbs and spices.

10. **Pecan Pie** - Pecan pie is a big holiday food bomb with a short fuse. Pecan pie does have pecans which, in moderation, such as sprinkled in a healthy salad, have a healthy nutrition punch. Take that same pecan and make it into a pie consisting of the crust (butter, flour, sugar and shortening) then add the filling of butter and sugar three ways...brown sugar, corn syrup, and molasses, it is a whopping holiday food bomb you may be wearing well into the New Year and beyond. ■



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