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 **Healthyroads**™

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Welcome to HEALTHYROADS!

In this monthly newsletter, you'll find a collection of articles on popular health and wellness topics. If you'd like additional support in your quest to lose weight, improve nutrition, develop an exercise plan, reduce stress, or quit smoking, visit us online at www.healthyroads.com.

There you can find a collection of tools to help you reach your health goals.

Wellness and Healthy Living How to Create a Family Health History

You have your mom's eyes and your dad's hair, your sister's freckles, and your grandpa's sturdy build. That's because you share their genes. And your appearance isn't the only part of you that is influenced by shared genes. Your health can be, too. If some of your family members have had certain conditions, you may be at higher risk for them, too. That's why having a record of your family's health history may help you care for your own health more effectively.

A family health history is a lot like a family tree. That is, it charts several generations of a family. But a family health history goes one step further. It also includes names of health issues that are known for each of those family members. A family health history can help you work with your doctor to:

- * Weigh your risk of certain conditions and choose screening tests that might be helpful for you.
- * Choose suitable treatments or changes in lifestyle.
- * Identify other family members who may be at higher risk for health problems.

If you'd like to make a health history, the first step is to work with other family members. A family get-together, such as a reunion, can be a good chance to gather information. You may find that many family members want to help. But keep in mind that others may not want to share all their health information. Respect their wishes. Your record doesn't have to be complete to be useful.

These tips may help you record your family health history:

- * Try to include at least 3 generations of your blood relatives.
- * For each person, list any known conditions and age when diagnosed.
- * For deceased family members, list age of death and the cause (if known).
- * Avoid guessing. Aim for correct information, even if you must leave some blanks. Remember to update the record from time to time.
- * You may want to give copies of your record to other family members.

A family health history can provide insight into health risks. And understanding where you come from may help you make informed choices about where you're going. If you would you like to create your own family health history, try a helpful online tool, such as this one: <http://www.cdc.gov/genomics/famhistory>

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IMAGINE...

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02

Nutrition and Weight Management: **Why Do I Feel Hungry All the Time?**

Hunger is your body's way of letting you know it's time to eat. But the urge to eat is not always that simple. Sometimes seeing, smelling, or even thinking about food can stoke the desire to eat. You may feel "hungry" or crave certain foods, even if you've had enough to eat. There may be a few reasons for it.

Emotional triggers. Maybe you eat more when you're stressed, angry, frustrated, or sad. If eating becomes your chief way of coping with unpleasant feelings, the habit can become hard to control. A better course of action may be to find healthier ways to deal with your feelings. This may involve talking with a family member or close friend or even a mental health provider.

Not eating enough. This might seem like a no-win situation if you're trying to lose weight. You've cut back how much you eat, but now all you can think about is how hungry you are. One of the problems might be what kind of food you're eating. Some foods, including refined carbs like white rice and foods with added sugars, can leave you feeling hungry again quickly. Try to eat a variety of whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy. These foods can help you control hunger and feel satisfied longer.

Hormone imbalance. Hormones in your body help regulate when you feel hungry and when you feel full. When you're low on certain nutrients your body needs, one of these hormones signals the brain that it's time to eat. Another hormone signals when you're full and that you can stop eating. But occasionally these hormones don't work as they should. If you think you may have a hormone imbalance, please talk with your doctor.

Lack of sleep. Have you ever hankered for that midnight snack? Studies have shown that a lack of sleep can affect your hunger hormones. These findings show that people who are sleep-deprived may feel hungrier, and they tend to crave foods high in fat and sugar. Consistent, quality rest is important for your health on many levels, so if you're having trouble sleeping, ask your doctor for advice on getting better sleep.

Finally, make sure you're really hungry. It's not unusual to mistake thirst for hunger. If you drink a lot of caffeine drinks every day but not so much water, you might be dehydrated and not realize it. So, before you relieve those hunger pangs with a snack, try drinking water first.

HEALTH TIP:

Hungry too soon after eating? Be sure to eat foods that help control hunger and keep you feeling satisfied longer. Choose fresh fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy.



SERIOUS ABOUT QUITTING?

We at Healthyroads understand the challenges of quitting smoking. That's why we offer a variety of online tools and articles to help you quit—once and for all. Our Web-based tools give you every chance to succeed. For anyone considering quitting smoking, take the first step and visit www.healthyroads.com.

Active Living Enjoy Exercise at Any Size

Getting active can seem daunting, especially when you carry extra weight. Exercise may feel uncomfortable in the beginning. But, if you're thinking about getting more active, you're on the right track. Exercise—and being active in general—are two of the best ways to get healthy and feel your best. And exercise can be safe for people of all sizes.

Getting more active can enhance your energy, mood, and sleep. It can help you burn calories and lose weight. It can help support healthy blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol levels. You can build lean muscle and support your bone and joint health. You can boost your flexibility and improve your balance. And, believe it or not, working out can be fun. Here are a few steps to take to get started:

Talk with your doctor. Your doctor can help you decide how often, how long, and how hard you should work out, as well as the types of exercise that will be safe for you. Your doctor may also suggest you work with a certified personal trainer.

Start slowly. Start where you are and build up. That may mean beginning with a 5-minute walk. Aim to work up to 3 ten-minute sessions a day, 5 days a week. Remember to warm up, pace yourself, and listen to your body. Add strength training to your fitness routine when you feel ready.

Opt for low-impact exercise. Go easy on your joints to start. You may want to avoid running and jumping. Try brisk walking, swimming, biking, or other low-impact workouts.

Choose something fun. Explore a host of activities until you find something you enjoy. Dancing, hiking, group fitness classes, or walking with a friend might be good choices.

Pay attention to how you are feeling during workouts. Stop what you are doing and seek medical care right away if you have breathing problems that persist, very fast heart rate or one that is not normal, or pain, tightness, or squeezing in your chest, abdomen, arm, neck, or jaw. Stop and sit or lie down slowly if you feel faint or dizzy. Keep still and rest until you feel better. Get medical care right away if these symptoms do not go away with rest.

Stay cool. Don't work out outdoors when the weather is too hot or humid. Work out indoors where the temperature is cooler. And make sure to hydrate before, during, and after your workouts.



04

Life Skills

Little Fixes for a Bad Day

Everybody feels down every now and then. It might be for a good reason—a tough day at work, an argument with someone close to you, worries about money. Or it might be for no reason at all; you may just feel like you're in a funk.

The good news is that there may be some small steps you can take to help improve your mood. They may not solve your problems. But they may help you put your problems in perspective and help you have a more positive outlook. Here are 5 fast fixes to try the next time you're feeling down.

- * **Find time for fitness.** Exercise can help you feel good. Literally. When you exercise, your body releases feel-good chemicals known as endorphins. Plus, it can ease stress, helping you feel calmer. And it can boost your sense of well-being.
- * **Let yourself laugh.** A good laugh can also release endorphins that can help improve your mood. It also increases your oxygen intake. This, in turn, benefits your heart, lungs, and muscles. And a good laugh can help reduce stress hormones, too.
- * **Refuel the right way.** Choose healthy foods, like fruits and veggies, low-fat dairy, lean protein, and whole grains. They can give you energy and help keep your blood sugar steady. Unhealthy foods—processed and high-fat comfort foods, salty snacks, and sugary treats, which you might crave when you're feeling down—can make you feel worse.

- * **Savor something you love.** Read a chapter of a book you're engrossed in. Pour a warm cup of herbal tea. Take a stroll outside. Focus on the pleasure you feel. And appreciate the joy that the activity brings you. It may lift your spirits.
- * **Socialize with friends and family.** Have dinner with your family. Meet up with your book club or running club. Grab drinks with a friend. Spend time with people you love and people who love and care for you. You may have fun and feel happier.

Try these little fixes for a quick pick-me-up. They can help nurture your body, ease your mind, and lift your spirits. From this improved vantage point, your problems may seem less daunting. And you may be in a better position to think more positively about your situation. These little fixes may even, in and of themselves, be enough to fully mend your mood.

GET STARTED

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