

# TOPHEALTH<sup>®</sup>

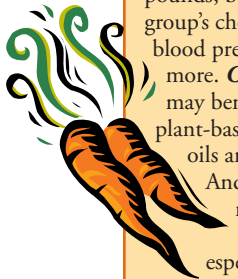
We Care About Your Health

The Health Promotion and Wellness Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2009

## ■ DR. ZORBA'S LONGEVITY CORNER

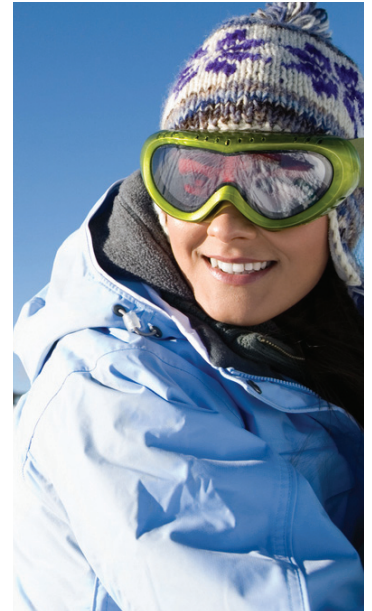
**VEG OUT.** New research from the Archives of Internal Medicine compared a high-carb vegetarian diet that included eggs, low-fat dairy and whole grains with a low-carb, high-protein diet rich in vegetable oils from nuts, soy and other veggies. After a month, both groups lost nearly 9 pounds, but the second group's cholesterol and blood pressure improved more. **Conclusion:** You may benefit from more plant-based proteins and oils and fewer carbs. And if you do eat meat, stick with poultry and especially fish.



## ❄️ Cold Weather Exercise

Outdoor activities can relieve cabin fever, pump up your energy on gloomy days and boost your immunity during flu season. **Have fun in the cold with a little preparation:**

- ❄️ **Check** with your health care provider first if you have cardiac problems or asthma, even if you've had no problems exercising in warmer temperatures.
- ❄️ **Dress** in layers. Wear moisture-wicking polypropylene, fleece or wool for insulation and a waterproof, breathable outer layer. Remove or replace layers as needed.
- ❄️ **Wear** a warm hat and gloves, and if you have respiratory or cardiac concerns, wear a scarf over your mouth.
- ❄️ **Stay** visible after dark. Wear light-colored or reflective clothing, and clip on a flashing light.
- ❄️ **Put** on footwear with good traction to avoid slips.
- ❄️ **Use** sunscreen and sunglasses to reduce UV rays and glare.
- ❄️ **Watch** the wind chill factor and consider staying indoors when it's below zero outside.
- ❄️ **Stay** hydrated. Drink one or two cups of water before exercising; you may need additional water during vigorous exercise.
- ❄️ **Don't** go it alone. Exercise with a buddy or let someone know when you'll return.



(continued on next page)

**DID YOU KNOW?** Once Thanksgiving dinner is done and you're storing the leftovers, the USDA recommends you keep cooked turkey meat no longer than four days and gravy only one to two days. If you're freezing leftovers, use them within six months for best quality.

## Diabetes Prevention

Type 2 diabetes is a serious health concern, but you can cut your risk dramatically with lifestyle changes. First, know the risk factors. **You're more likely to develop diabetes if you:**

- Are **overweight** or inactive (exercise less than three times per week)
- Are **age** 45 or older
- Have a **family history** of the disease or have a non-white background (African American, American Indian, Asian American, Latino or Pacific Islander)
- Have **high blood pressure** (140/90 or higher), elevated triglyceride levels (250 or more) or low HDL cholesterol levels (35 or lower)



- Are **prediabetic**, have had gestational (pregnancy-related) diabetes or have had at least one baby weighing more than 9 pounds

If you have some of these factors, you can take steps to reduce your risk. Add at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise per day or 150 minutes per week. If you're overweight, trim your calories to reduce your body weight by five to 10 percent. Combine these changes and reduce your risk by a whopping 58 percent — or 71 percent if you're 60 or older.

**TopHealth takeaway:** Medication can help reduce diabetes risk, but changes in diet and exercise appear to work even better. Ask your

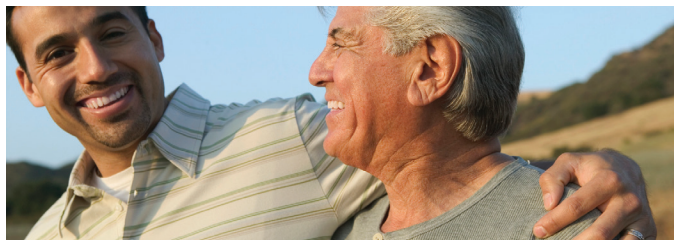
health care provider for the best prevention program for you.

**GO ONLINE!** For diabetes prevention, small changes can make a big difference. Find a quick guide in this month's Well Connections Online Supplement. Plus, take a QuikRisk Self Assessment at [www.personalbest.com/extras/diabetesnov09](http://www.personalbest.com/extras/diabetesnov09).



“Money is the most envied, but the least enjoyed. Health is the most enjoyed, but the least envied.”

~ Charles Caleb Colton



## Can You Reduce Your ALZHEIMER'S Risk?

Mental decline may seem like a natural part of old age, but dementia is a progressive medical condition with many possible causes. Researchers are making progress in learning how to fight Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia.

### Suggested preventive steps for lowering your risk:

- ✓ Participate in **mentally challenging activities** such as doing crossword puzzles, learning a new language or playing a musical instrument.
- ✓ Remain **physically active**.
- ✓ Develop a strong **social network**.
- ✓ Maintain **healthy blood pressure**.
- ✓ Stay at an appropriate **weight**. Belly fat is of special concern as a risk factor.
- ✓ Get adequate levels of **vitamin D**. While sun exposure promotes vitamin D production in the body, it's worth noting that you should protect yourself from too much sun. Taking a supplement or eating fortified foods, such as milk or cereal, can also help you get more vitamin D.
- ✓ Eat **fish** regularly. Fish contains “good fats” (omega-3 fatty acids) thought to promote healthy brain function. Other foods being investigated for their protective potential include vegetables, berries and turmeric (a spice often found in curry dishes).
- ✓ Don't dismiss **coffee**. Research is still preliminary, but one study found that people who drank three to five cups a day were at lower risk.
- ✓ Prevent **type 2 diabetes**. New studies show that people with diabetes are at increased risk for Alzheimer's.

## Cold Weather ... (continued)

Take care to avoid frostbite and hypothermia. If you notice pain, numbness, tingling or skin whitening (usually on the face, fingers or toes), get out of the cold immediately and slowly warm the area without rubbing. If hypothermia symptoms occur (intense shivering, slurred speech, fatigue or loss of coordination), seek emergency help.



## PUMPKIN POWER

Pumpkins shouldn't be limited to pies or jack-o'-lanterns. *Here's how to get more mileage from these orange orbs packed with beta-carotene, protein and vitamin A:*

① **Pick a good specimen.** Small “pie pumpkins” are more tender and juicy. Choose one free of blemishes with a 1-to-2-inch stem and rich, tough orange skin.

② **Prepare a puree.** Remove the stem and scoop out the seeds and stringy parts. The seeds are nutritious and tasty, so remove, rinse and dry them. Then spread them out on a pan, spray with oil, season if desired and roast at 250 degrees until golden. Choose one of these techniques to cook the flesh:

- **Cut** the pumpkin in half and place it, cut side down, in a pan and bake at 350 degrees until tender.
- **Prepare** as above and microwave on high for 15 minutes or until soft.
- **Cut** into pieces and boil for 20 to 30 minutes.

Cool and peel the pumpkin before pureeing it in a food processor.

③ **Try something new.**


- **Sprinkle** roasted seeds on salads.
- **Blend** pumpkin into smoothies.
- **Mix** puree into your favorite pancake batter.
- **Add** puree to pasta sauce, use it to make a soup or freeze it for future use.



**HAVE A SLICE WITHOUT THE PRICE.** Pizza is delicious, convenient and made to order. The downside is that it tends to be loaded with calories. **Consider this:** Burning the 300-plus calories in a single slice of pizza takes about 40 minutes of biking at a moderate pace. Whether you're eating out or making your own at home, enjoy a slice without blowing your diet.

Choose a pizza (or make your own) topped with vegetables instead of fatty meats, pepperoni or extra cheese. **To top it off:** Eat one slice and fill up on salad ... remove some of the grease on top with a napkin ... choose thin-crust ... make a homemade pizza on whole-wheat pita bread using part-skim mozzarella cheese instead of whole-milk mozzarella.

**NEXT MONTH: Build a Better Body Image**

 **WELL CONNECTIONS:** Take a QuikRisk™ Self Assessment at [www.personalbest.com/extras/diabetesnov09](http://www.personalbest.com/extras/diabetesnov09).