

Suicide: Do You Know the Facts?

By Dr. Daniel Villa

As someone who lost a close loved one to suicide in 2008, I can personally attest to the types of emotional challenges and unanswered questions that those left behind often experience. I was surprised to learn how little I actually knew about suicide until I had encountered it in my own family. An all too pervasive reality in today's society, suicide remains a top public health concern that has garnered much more recognition in light of recent celebrity deaths and social media representation. Even with the barrage of coverage that this topic receives, do you know the basic facts about it?

Below is a brief five-item quiz aimed to assess your understanding of various issues related to suicide. Take a moment to consider how you would answer each item, and then refer to the answer key for a more detailed explanation of the answers.

1. Suicide was ranked as the _____ leading cause of death in the year 2013.
 - a. 2nd
 - b. 6th
 - c. 8th
 - d. 10th
2. Which of the following is not a risk factor for suicide?
 - a. Previous suicide attempts
 - b. Depression or other mental illnesses
 - c. Abusing substances like drugs and alcohol
 - d. All of the above are risk factors
3. What is the relationship between gender and suicide?
 - a. Males are more likely to end their lives through suicide than females
 - b. Females are more likely end their lives through suicide than males
 - c. Males and females end their lives through suicide at an equal rate
 - d. None of the above statements are true
4. What is one helpful action that someone can take if he or she suspects that one is at risk for suicide?
 - a. Tell the person that things are not as bad as they seem
 - b. Explain the negative impact that his or her suicide will have on others
 - c. Ask the person if they are thinking about committing suicide
 - d. Leave the person alone to think about the consequences of their actions
5. National Suicide Prevention Week is held in the month of:
 - a. July
 - b. August
 - c. September
 - d. October

How well did you do? Find out below:

1. **The answer is D.** According to the National Center for Health Statistics as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (n.d.), across all age groups, suicide resulted in a total of 41,194 deaths. It ranked 2nd among the 15-24 (4,878) and 25-34 (6,348) age groups, 3rd among the 10-14 age group (386), 4th among the 35-44 age group (6,551), 5th among the 45-54 age group (8,621), and 8th among the 55-64 age group (7,135). Clearly, suicide impacts virtually all age groups across the lifespan and has been consistently ranked among the leading causes of death in previous years.

2. **The answer is D.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (n.d.) identifies these as risk factors, in addition to physical illness, feeling alone, and family violence. Other factors include access to weapons at home, having been incarcerated, and exposure to the suicidal behaviors of other individuals (National Institute of Mental Health, 2015). These are just a few examples. Can you think of any others?

3. **The answer is A.** As noted by the National Institute of Mental Health (2015), death due to suicide is more probable among men than women. Typically, males elect to use more lethal means to commit suicide than females.

4. **The answer is C.** Inducing guilt or minimizing a suicidal individual's feelings are not effective ways to offer help. According to the Surgeon General as part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (n.d), asking someone if they are thinking about committing suicide is one thing a person can do. Asking someone if they are suicidal does not encourage them to make an attempt and can be helpful in terms of obtaining critical information (e.g., specific plans, when/where the act might take place, etc.) Other approaches noted include calling a suicide prevention hotline, not leaving the individual alone, taking the individual to seek immediate care, and removing potentially dangerous items (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.).

5. **The answer is C.** The National Association of Suicidology (2015) provides a range of information and resources related to suicide prevention and actively promotes September's focus on prevention during National Suicide Prevention Week and World Suicide Prevention Day, held on September 10 of each year.



Image retrieved from www.desifunny.tk

After having taken the quiz, what can you do to be a part of the effort to prevent suicide?

Get informed. As the saying goes, "Knowledge is power," and information is critical when it comes to identifying and reducing the presence of suicide. Educate yourself on the basics of suicide - [what it is](#), [what to do](#), and where to find resources, such as the [Center for Disease Control](#), the [National Institute of Mental Health](#), the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) and the [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#). These websites also contain links to additional information and resources. If you're interested in learning about prevention efforts from a scholarly perspective, a list of prevention interventions are available through the [Centers for Disease Control](#) and evidence-based programs are available through the [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#). Don't forget that our own [University library's](#) electronic journal collection is also a great place to find research articles related to suicide and suicide prevention.

Get involved. Take your knowledge to the next level by being an advocate for change. Whether it be at the local or national level, there are numerous opportunities to take part in suicide prevention initiatives. [The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#) provides opportunities to learn more about advocacy within your home community, and the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) recruits volunteers with a passion for helping others. You can also engage in smaller scale efforts, such as volunteering in locations where you reside that provide education or outreach on suicide prevention, and using everyday opportunities (e.g., talking with others, using social media, creative outlets, etc.) to promote awareness.

Giving a Gift to Your Future Self

By Olivia Rastello

Do you want a gift? Of course you do! What kind of gift do you want? The best type of gift you can give yourself is your health. Without health, you cannot participate in anything that you want or need to do. The gift should be an enjoyable and memorable activity that will elongate your life.

Still can't picture physical activity being a gift? Here's an example: Sally can't keep up with her kids on their one mile walk to school every morning. She needs to turn around at the half mile mark due to her current level of fitness. She begins walking a half an hour each day as a promise to herself to become more active. After a month, she can now complete the full one mile walk. She feels better physically and mentally every day. Sally gave a gift to herself of improved fitness and improved her quality of life.

What kind of gift do you want?

Do you want bigger biceps or leaner legs? How about personal goals like being able to play basketball with your grandchild for the first time, or being able to keep up at your next volleyball game? Think about what you've always wanted. It will motivate you to work harder towards your physical goals and feel accomplished in the long term! No goal is too small or too big!



Image retrieved from <http://pixabay.com/en/present-box-dole-favor-gift-150291/>

Benefits of Physical Activity

Participating in physical activity to improve fitness is a spectacular idea and gift. Being physically active on a regular basis will improve anyone's physical fitness. Engaging in physical activities individually, with friends, or with family is a memorable and motivating gift for anyone. To be able to perform physical activities needed throughout the day, and to be able to respond to physically challenging situations, is a very vital and powerful gift in itself.

Some benefits of being physically active that you may not be aware of are:

- More restful and beneficial sleep
- Improved body composition and bone density
- Enhanced ability to resist colds and other infectious disease
- Lower risk of chronic disease, some types of cancers, type 2 diabetes, anxiety, and depression
- Longer life expectancy
- Higher quality of life
- Stronger self-image
- Faster wound healing
- Reduced menstrual symptoms
- Improved mental functioning
- More youthful appearance
- Reduced stress
- Lower risk of being overweight or obese
- Improved mood and mental outlook
- Eases weight management

(Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011; Richards, Xiaoxiao, Kelly, Chau, Bauman, & Ding, 2015.; Sizer & Whitney, 2014)

Making a Gift List

Write a gift list. Start with five to six physical goals that you want to accomplish. There is more than one way to start earning a gift for your future self. The example format to get started is “if I do X, I will get the gift of Y”. Here are a few examples to get you started:

- If I consistently do aerobic exercise, I will get the gift of being less fatigued when showing up to work.
- If I consistently do resistance training, I will get the gift of lifting heavier objects.
- If I do physical activity in my daily life, I will get the gift of decreasing my chances of getting an illness or infectious disease.

Take out a piece of paper and a pen, and start brainstorming a few ideas. Follow the above examples, and start working to get your gift. Make sure to create your own examples of both short term and long term gifts that strive toward your physical goals.

Finding healthy gifts

In many homes, unhealthy food is used as a gift. For example, during birthday celebrations, the individual celebrating their birthday will commonly eat several pieces of cake. Many people see food as a form of a gift or reward in itself. It is important to change the mindset of rewards being solely food to other award systems. An easy format to begin with is to replace option A with option B. An example is to replace a slice of chocolate cake with watching a favorite DVD at home. Some other examples include:

- Replace binge eating with taking a nap. Naps can be beneficial for both physical and mental health.
- Replace ordering a pizza with planning a night out – ensure food choices are healthy while having a night out.
- Replace binge drinking with taking a bubble bath.

Try coming up with some examples of your own.

Physical Activity Guidelines

The guidelines for most American adults consist of getting regular exercise that is dynamic in nature. It is important for you to monitor and record the type of exercise you are getting. Record the duration of activity as well. Please click on the link to view more information regarding recommendations for each activity for adults aged 18 to 64 years <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adults/index.htm>.

How to fit physical activity into your schedule

Here are some examples of physical activities you can fit into your schedule no matter what:

- Take a brisk walk to work instead of a leisurely walk
- Set your alarm early to go exercise
- Do sit-ups during TV commercials
- Make physical exercise into a date – go for a hike together
- Walk around the neighborhood after finishing a meal
- Host a family park day
- Take the stairs when available

There are many ways to integrate physical activity into your daily life. View your physical activity plans as a high priority in your life and schedule it as such!

Final steps			
	Be Consistent	Get Involved	Support & Advice
Step 1	Start with small and realistic goals	Join friends and family in physical activities	Talk to supportive friends and family members
Step 2	Transition to stepped goals that build upon one another	Join a local activity like a gym or exercise class	Research advice from other people on the same journey (e.g. online message boards)
Step 3	After completing a goal, move on to the next one	Get involved in the community through charity work and educational activities	Seek communities for additional support and advice (e.g. personal coach, YMCA, gym)

You did it!

Now that you've finished reading this article, what gift do you want and what are you going to do to get it? To get started, refer to the activity log following this article. In addition, make sure to finish writing your gift list. It is the first big step in proactively thinking about overall health and physical activity.

Here's to wishing the best of luck to every individual who is beginning the journey of bettering their health!

What does it mean to have mindful thinking?

By Karina Lara

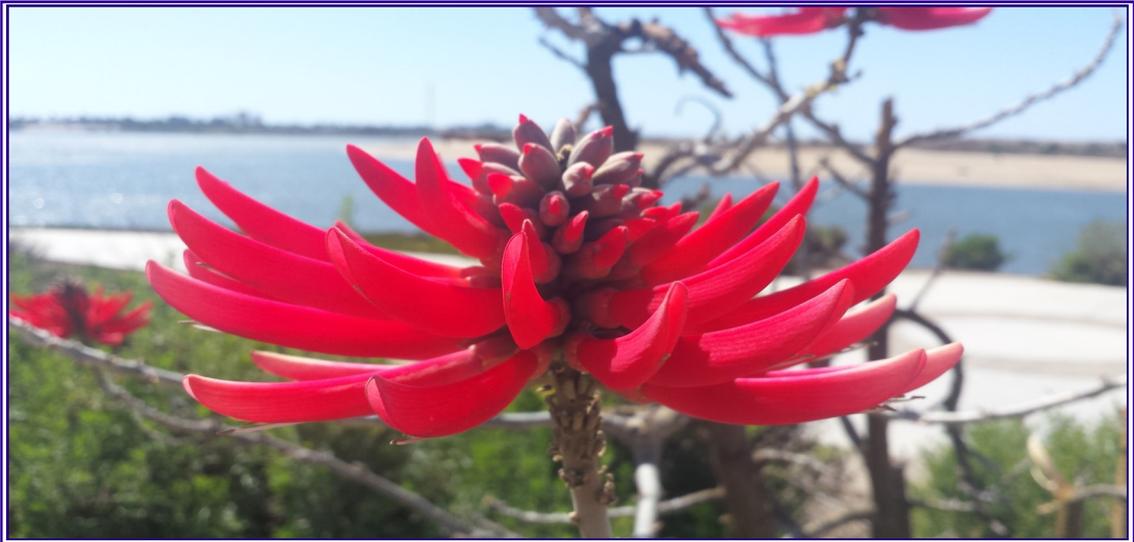


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Do you ever stop to think how your brain is able to focus on the sound of a bird? Or wonder about the whisper of the cool breeze against your skin? Moments like that can grab your attention and remind you of how important life is. No matter what you are going through, any troubles, anxieties, or insecurities, being in tune with your innermost, powerful self-worth is as good as life gets. Even though at times we can be very hard on ourselves, the beauty of mindful thinking is to know when to tune in to the environment around you for clarity and appreciation of life. The power of a deep breath can direct you to your better, present, mindful thinking. With a conscious mind, we tune in to our environment and surroundings and remind the mind that our living vessel is eager to appreciate life and empower.

Above all, be attentive and aware in all of your responsibilities. From an online college student's perspective, being able to overcome any obstacle is very challenging at times but indeed rewarding. One of the best ways to overcome any insecurity in regards to our online environment is to take a deep breath, feel alive, and check our surroundings. If your inner most powerful self is not feeling inspired, motivated, or willing to participate at what's at hand, take charge and feel alive. Make adjustments to your environment and surroundings, and enjoy having clarity and an uplifting sensation of self-worth. For example, make it a point to live with intent and mindfulness in all that you do. From your scholastic tasks to your personal life, be in tune with your senses to feel empowered.

More importantly, understand that having a sense of self-worth is being able to be your own best friend so that you may face your troubles, anxieties, and insecurities in a loving, positive way instead of criticizing your self-worth (Valentine, 2015). Through mindfulness, you can develop a stronger sense of self-worth. As mentioned by Carson, & Langer (2006), "Mindful individuals are truly authentic in that they are fully engaged with the environment and are busy noticing novel aspects of the situation, rather than devoting attentional resources toward winning the approval of others or toward bolstering fragile self-esteem" (p.31). With that in mind, when mindfulness is increased, your authenticity for your self-worth attracts a considerable intensity in your educational competence, good health in body and mind, positive affect toward life, creativity, and reduced burnout, as noted by Carson, & Langer (2006). As a college student, accepting my self-worth has expanded my horizons like no other.

Pay attention to your surroundings and appreciate all the inspiration that comes along with it. Consider going to your local coffee shop and reach for that human interaction. When you are actively present in the moment, you are mindful of your surroundings, and in tune to appreciate the new aspects of things previously taken for granted. By the same token, at times, when I have a roadblock, I go for a bike ride to clear my mind. Feeling the fresh air on my face is a phenomenal way for me to be mindful of my inner being, life. Other ways you can be mindful of your surroundings and reduce stress, insecurity, or anxiety is through the practice of yoga, exercise, breathing, and even laughter! So as long as you are fully mindful of your being, in that present moment, with no worries or self-judgments, your self-worth will beam with all its glory. With continuous effort to mindful thinking, your health, and overall outlook on life, will reap the benefits of an inner- most powerful you.

Obsessing about Healthy Eating could be Problematic

By Dr. Nina Bell

Eating disorders have just taken an interesting twist. We all understand the concepts of anorexia nervosa, bulimia, binge eating, and obsessive overeating, but did you know there are those with an unhealthy obsession with eating healthy?

Although the condition has recently been recognized as a new eating disorder, it is fast becoming a health concern for people with what has been coined "orthorexia nervosa" (Bratman, 2015). The term ortho means "right or correct" and the term orexis means appetite (Kratina, n.d.). Together, the term signifies a fixation on correct eating behaviors and was first identified by Dr. Steven Bratman who suffers from the disorder himself. Bratman is a holistic physician practicing in Ft. Collins, Colorado, who is author of the books, Health Food Junkies and Alternative Medicine Sourcebook: A Realistic Evaluation of Alternative Healing Methods (Bratman, 1997).

Individuals with orthorexia nervosa have a preoccupation with eating only healthy foods such as whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, which are considered "good" foods. Everything else is classified as "bad." Furthermore, if they happen to give in to something they deem unhealthy, perhaps a cup of coffee (caffeine), they self-punish with exceptionally stricter eating, fasting, and exercising. Who would think that eating healthy would pose health risks? The issue lies not in the foods they are eating, but in what they are not eating coupled with what they are thinking (Brytek-Materia, 2012). A very restrictive diet coupled with an obsession with food can lead to a lack of poor nutrient balance. In addition, it can lead to the consumption of far fewer calories than what would be needed for daily survival. The human body's needs vary based on gender, age, weight, and height. Once you determine your basal metabolic rate (BMR), you can determine how many calories you need if you simply slept all day. In general, those calories are about 1200 for women and 1800 for men (Collins, 2014). With orthorexia, a person could literally eat vegetables all day and consume less than 500 calories. That puts the body at a dangerous risk for disease and sickness.

Recent scientific studies have found several common characteristics among those with this condition. They believe that being overweight is a sign of weakness, they disapprove of people who do not eat like they do, they believe that most people should be blamed for their own diseases because of what they consume, and they spend a significant amount of time preparing their meals (Brytek-Matera, 2012; Varga et al., 2014). This type of behavior is not considered a weight loss type of regime. It is an intense phobia about eating only "pure" food. Anything else is off limits, permanently. What's interesting about the characteristics of someone with orthorexia is that their food intake is far more important than their personal values, interpersonal relationships, careers, family, and friends (Bratman, 1997; Brytek-Matera, 2012). Therefore, besides the potential of consuming too few calories to survive, they have also placed themselves into social isolation because of it.

Psychiatrists have developed a test to determine a diagnosis (Varga et al., 2014). Many of the questions revolve around your thoughts and feelings about food, diet, and life in general. It is fine to be concerned about your dietary intake; however, it is not healthy to be obsessed with it. Bratman (2015) stressed that a healthy diet and being concerned about your foods is not an issue; it only becomes an issue when you add the following:

1. It is taking up an inordinate amount of time and attention in your life.
2. Deviating from the diet causes extreme guilt and punishment.
3. It causes you to avoid others and become socially isolated.



Image retrieved from <http://www.therapywithmeredith.com/>

Our world is consumed with the concept of "health" foods. We have low-fat, no-fat, low-carb, no sugar, caffeine-free, and so on. Couple that with the society's fixation on being thin, and it is very easy to fall victim to the orthorexia mindset, especially if you are already vulnerable through low self-esteem.

If you think you might be a victim on orthorexia nervosa, you might want to talk with your doctor or a psychologist about the condition.

Fill Up Your Glasses and Hydrate This Summer

By Elsie Goycoolea

The Earth is mostly water and so are we. We need to drink water simply because it is the body's preferred choice of fuel to jump start every biological process from digestion, to nutrient absorption, circulation, and breathing. According to Popkin et al. (2010), "Water comprises from 75% body weight in infants to 55% in elderly and is essential for cellular homeostasis and life." Most significantly, our brain is made up of 70% water, and our lungs are comprised of up to 90% of H₂O.

Global warming may be responsible for rising temperatures and for the Earth experiencing longer and more extensive droughts, as well as, the melting of ice caps. With heat water evaporates and when temperatures are high, especially in the summer, our body responds through increased water loss.

Why Is Water More Important in the Summer?

The human body will mainly lose water through the processes of urination, sweating, and breathing. These are all normal biological processes; however, if these fluids are not replaced with an adequate water intake, we become dehydrated. During the summer these biological water loss processes take place more frequently and in larger quantities; we lose more water, faster. Even little physical activity can make us sweat or breathe faster.



Image retrieved from <http://afpcenter.com/the-importance-of-summer-hydration/>

How Does Hydration Affect the Human Body?

Hydration levels affect our movement—With exercise, the body temperature rises and more sweat is produced as a cooling mechanism. "During challenging athletic events, it is not uncommon for athletes to lose 6–10% of body weight in sweat loss" (Popkin et al., 2010). Fluid intake is recommended before, during, and after exercise. Even with very low levels of hydration fatigue, brain fog, a decrease in performance, and overall motivation can be symptomized.

Hydration levels affect our thinking—Since our brain is almost 70% water, not drinking enough fluids to compensate water losses can affect the brain's ability to communicate with the rest of the body. Epstein et al. (1980) as mentioned by the Institute of Medicine (2004) detailed, "water deficits of 2% of body weight or more are accompanied by declining mental function." Losing your train of thought, not reacting to simple stimulus, or becoming more forgetful are all signs of dehydration.

Hydration levels affect our internal cleaning system—Water is an essential component of adequate digestive processes. It helps move food down the gastrointestinal tract to encourage waste product elimination out of the body. "Inadequate fluid consumption is touted as a common culprit in constipation, and increasing fluid intake is a frequently recommended treatment" (Popkin et al., 2010). When there is not enough water the body takes it out of our cells and stools which impedes normal digestive processes. Our kidneys also contribute in the elimination of toxins and other waste products as long as there is an adequate intake of water. The stronger the yellow hue of urine, the greater indication of dehydration.

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Measles & Polio Making a Comeback in the United States

By Jeni De La Cruz

Measles and polio are two diseases that have previously been deemed eradicated in the United States. However, with recent events, measles have made a comeback and with many choosing not to vaccinate their children, it is possible that polio could find its way back in as well. The anti-vaccine movement is creating an issue for the country, and these diseases could become more widespread in the near future if nothing is done to stop it.

Since measles is no longer a common disease in the United States, few people know anything about it. Measles is a respiratory disease, also known as rubella. Symptoms range from fever, runny nose, cough and rash, to more extreme symptoms. For those that contract the measles virus, 1 in 10 will get an ear infection, 1 in 20 will get pneumonia, and 1-2 in 1,000 will die. Measles can be easily spread from person to person through saliva. Prevention for measles comes in the form of the MMR vaccination, which stands for measles, mumps, and rubella. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014).



Image retrieved from <http://www.thelibertybeacon.com/>

In the U.S., from January 1 to September 29, 2014, there were 594 cases and 18 outbreaks of the measles. That time frame did not even cover the entire year, which went on to top out at almost 650 cases. In this year alone, from January 1 to March 6, 2015, there have been 173 cases and 4 outbreaks. According to the CDC (2014), the biggest reason for the high numbers is due to many travelers coming to the U. S. from countries where measles is common and many of those that contracted the disease were not vaccinated. The United States has almost hit the same amount of cases that were reported in the entire year of 2013, which is just under 200 (CDC, 2014; CDC, 2015). This spike is a bit frightening, especially for those that rely on community immunity, or herd immunity, until their children are old enough to get all of their vaccinations.

Polio, which is also known as poliomyelitis, is a disease that is not well known. Most people that contract this disease will not experience any symptoms at all; however, some may experience sore throat, tiredness, fever, nausea, headaches, and stomach pain. More extreme symptoms can be far worse since polio can badly affect the brain and spinal cord, causing paresthesia, meningitis, and paralysis. Polio is spread very easily through contact with those infected, either by saliva or coming in contact with feces. Since there is no cure for polio, the best way to protect people is through vaccination with the IPV (Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine) or the OPV (Oral Poliovirus Vaccine) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014).

When it comes to measles, California appears to be the most affected state. On March 27, 2014, there were 49 confirmed cases of measles and by March 6, 2015, there were 173 confirmed cases (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014). That means that the reported cases for measles is more than three and a half times higher than what it was last year. As of February 11, 2015, there were a total of 125 cases of measles with 110 of these cases affecting California residents that visited theme parks in the state. Interestingly, 49 out of the 110 were unvaccinated; 12 were infants that were too young for the vaccine, and 28 were intentionally unvaccinated due to personal beliefs (California Department of Public Health, 2014).

It is possible to be exempt from the requirements of immunizations, such as those who belong to certain religions that oppose immunizations. While public schools require immunizations for children to attend, private schools seem to be a bit more lenient on the requirements on immunizations. In the state of California, legal documentation is required to obtain the exemption, thus allowing the child to attend school without having had the required immunizations.

The question, "Why should we be worried about these diseases?" is one that has recently become quite popular. More parents are choosing not to vaccinate their children, which seemingly has led to a "vaccination strike." This "strike" apparently started when invalid research reported that vaccinations caused autism in the late 1990s (Stroud, L., 2005). While this causal relationship was quickly disproved by valid research and a final report by the CDC (CDC, 2013; DeStefano, Price and Weintraub, 2013), the scare prompted parents to start a movement to keep their children unvaccinated.

The damage has already been done and parents are still scared of vaccinations. If children are not getting the MMR, they are likely not getting the polio vaccine either. ABC news recently reported that polio could be making a comeback and stressed the importance of vaccinating every child against the disease (ABC News, 2014). The recent spread of the polio virus to ten countries is an "extraordinary event" and public health emergency of international concern (ABC News, 2014).

It is still critical for children to receive their immunizations. In 2014, the California Department of Public Health suggests that children get their first MMR between 12 and 15 months of age and then a second between the ages of 4 and 6. Any adults who have not been vaccinated are urged to get it and those that have only received one round are urged to get vaccinated as soon as possible (California Department of Public Health, 2014). The CDC suggests that vaccinations for polio be given at 2 months, 4 months, 6-18 months, and 4-6 years (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014).

Policy development is extremely important as the country is just seeing the beginning of this fight. It is imperative that state and local health departments take action in making sure that the public is aware of what is going on and how to protect themselves from getting measles and polio. Measles has already made a comeback, and if this pattern continues, it is likely that polio will make a comeback as well. Information and education is imperative. The likelihood of everyone agreeing to get vaccinated is very slim, but the importance of awareness and education could stop these diseases from being spread.



Image retrieved from <http://www.skepticalraptor.com/skepticalraptorblog.php/tag/vaccine-exemption/>.

Continued from page 1 — Are you stressed yet?

4) Find your pillars. It is important that you have strong foundations or pillars, emotionally, physically, and mentally. I find my strength in my husband and daughter, but even then I still need to prepare myself mentally for the unexpected so that my growth and development will not be hindered. Strong pillars can relieve stress and strengthen your will.

5) Divide tasks amongst the household members. According to Brotherson (2007), transition means changes may come with a variety of tasks for both heads of households, which creates a few misunderstandings because roles, duties, and responsibilities are different. Dividing the daily tasks can help lower the stress level for both working parents. It can also increase productivity. A productive day means succeeding in time management, without stress being in the way.

6) Time management. Activity planners (i.e. daily and monthly planners) and sticky notes can help manage your time wisely. Since most days are filled with busy schedules, it is helpful to write down appointments and outstanding tasks which can serve as reminders. This habit can also increase your productivity and manage your time more efficiently. Employing successful time management strategies can relieve stress from your daily tasks and whatever else may come up.

7) Find a small portion of “free time.” A five-minute activity such as deep breaths can help you relax, decrease your stress level, and regain your strength.

8) Spiritual need. Praying may provide you with confidence to tackle obstacles on any given day. Isaiah 40:31, “but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint” (Isaiah 40:31 New International Version).

To be a military spouse, an employee, a parent, and also a student can come with high levels of stress, which can quickly build-up, and break you down. Finding your pillars, managing your time wisely, choosing your friends carefully, surrounding yourself with positive people, finding your free time, and praying can all help minimize stress. By relieving your stress, you will be more productive and efficient. Moreover, you will be a more satisfied and happier person as a whole.

Continued from page 8 — Fill Up Your Glasses and Hydrate This Summer

Hydration levels affect our physique—Every cell in the human body contains water, and skin cells are no exception. “The skin contains approximately 30% water, which contributes to plumpness, elasticity, and resiliency” (Popkin et al. 2010). A lack of water will put the body in alertness mode and drive it to draw water from cell membranes, which might have an effect on skin texture and tightness.

How Can I Hydrate My Body?

The adequate intake (AI) of water as detailed by the Institute of Medicine (2004) both from beverages and food accounts for 2.7L in women and 3.7L in men. These figures have been calculated for inactive individuals between the ages of 19 and 50 years old.

Beverages—While there has been arduous debate over whether coffee and tea beverages will have a dehydrating effect due to their caffeine content, recent studies show that moderate coffee intake does not become detrimental to overall fluid intake. Killer et al. (2014) concluded, “Coffee did not result in dehydration when provided in a moderate dose of 4 mg/kg of caffeine in four cups per day.” A moderate intake of coffee alongside a general higher water intake does not seem to cancel out overall hydration efforts as long as body weight and body composition are taken into account.

Food—Fruits and vegetables are often neglected sources of hydration. These foods have a high water content that is equally used by the body to replenish dehydrated skin cells, organs, and fuel those biological processes. Eating fruits and vegetables in their raw form in salads or smoothies contributes to the recommended 20% of water intake obtained from food (Slavin et al., 2012). Fruits and vegetables with over 90% of water content include grapefruit, watermelon, strawberries, celery, or broccoli.

The summer season and warmer temperatures make spending time outdoors doing physical activity or spending some leisure time with friends and family extremely attractive. Making sure that the body is fueled up and hydrated make all these experiences much more fun and memorable.

Fill up your glass, and let’s cheer for the summer!

All hail...KALE!!!

By Dr. Roxanne Beharie

By now most everyone has heard about the kale craze. I must say it took me a while to jump on the bandwagon, and while I am still not sold on kale chips, I can definitely see what all the excitement is about. It is believed that the omega-3s in kale give it anti-inflammatory health benefits. Additionally, kale has a very high Vitamin K content, and Vitamin K is a known key ingredient for helping the body regulate inflammatory processes. Another health benefit attributed to kale is cardiovascular support due to its cholesterol-lowering ability.

Research has also shown that the glucosinolates in kale provide cancer-preventing benefits. Regular intake of kale has been mainly shown to reduce the risk for colon and breast cancer, but there is also evidence of reduced risk for bladder, prostate, and ovarian cancers. If you are still not sold on kale, here is another benefit, eye health. Kale has a wealth of carotenoids, which absorb light and act as natural filters from excessive exposure to ultraviolet light that can damage eyes (think of the UV filters in your sunglasses).

The good news is that you can reap these benefits whether you eat kale raw or cooked; however, for maximum nutrition and flavor it is recommended that kale is steamed for no more than 5 minutes. Therefore, if you are in the market for something new, ask your grocer about kale, and try this recipe developed by Sofia Mendoza from the Food and Finance High School in New York, NY. Sofia's recipe won third place at the AICR/C-CAP Healthy Appetizer Contest.

Roasted Acorn Squash with Kale and Quinoa

INGREDIENTS

1 Tbsp. rice vinegar
 2½ Tbsp. lime juice, divided
 1 tsp honey
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1/2 Tbsp. minced fresh ginger
 Salt and pepper, to taste
 2 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. extra virgin olive oil, divided
 3 small (about 1 lb. each) acorn squash
 1/2 cup quinoa, rinsed and drained
 1/2 medium red bell pepper, small dice
 1/2 cup blueberries
 4 cups chopped kale leaves



Image retrieved from <http://preventcancer.aicr.org/>

In medium bowl, mix together rice vinegar, 1/2 tablespoon of lime juice, and honey. Add garlic and ginger, whisk briskly. Whisk in salt and pepper to taste and let sit 5 minutes. Gradually add 2 tablespoons olive oil and whisk until well blended. Set aside. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cut each squash in half crosswise. Cut just enough off both ends of squash so they lay flat on baking sheet. Using a spoon, remove fibers and seeds from center of squash halves. With paring knife, score flesh of squash. Lightly brush inside and top of squash halves with remaining olive oil. Lightly sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake for about 40 minutes or until fork can easily pierce flesh. Remove from oven, and lightly brush with 1 tablespoon of prepared ginger-lime dressing. In small pot, combine rinsed and drained quinoa with 1 cup water. Bring to boil, cover and let simmer over low heat for about 15 minutes, until all water is absorbed. Remove from heat and add red pepper and blueberries, reserving a few blueberries for garnish. Add 2 tablespoons lime juice and salt and pepper, to taste. Set aside. Over medium heat in large skillet, add 2 tablespoons water and kale. Cover and steam kale for 2 minutes, just until wilted. Remove from heat and place kale in medium bowl. Add quinoa mixture and toss with remaining ginger-lime dressing.

To serve, place each squash half on plate or soup bowl. Fill each half with kale and quinoa salad and garnish with reserved blueberries. Serve warm.

Contributors



Irish Fontan-Basinga is seeking a BA degree in Health Care Administration and is looking forward to graduating this year. Class of 2015! Irish is married to a sailor and together they have a two year old daughter, Lara Isabel. Irish loves reading books, playing field hockey and spending time with her family.



Dr. Daniel Villa is an Assistant Professor with the College of Health, Human Services, and Science where he teaches courses primarily in Health and Human Services and Gerontology. He holds a PhD in Social Welfare from UC Berkeley and has published articles with journals such as *Illness, Crisis, & Loss* and online magazines such as *The New Social Worker*.



Olivia Rastello is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Health and Wellness. She has a long term goal of becoming a health and wellness professor and/or an employee at a health promoting non-profit organization. She is an advocate of volunteer work and is currently volunteering for the Crohn's and Colitis foundation of America as well as for *Cooking Matters*.



Karina Lara is in her second year at Ashford majoring in Journalism and Mass Communication. She graduated from La Joya High School in Texas. Maria is committed to writing and aims to be an award winning writer.



Dr. Nina M. Bell is the chair of the BA in Health Education degree program for Ashford University. She earned her PhD and MPH from Walden University and has been at Ashford since 2011.



Elsie Goycoolea is an international Ashford student from Spain pursuing an B.A. in Journalism and Mass Communications. She is a healthy lifestyle enthusiast and she currently combines her studies with writing on her personal blog: sharing healthiness.



Sandra Rebeor is a full time Instructor at Ashford's College of Health, Human Services, and Science and primarily teaches courses in the Health and Wellness program. Her educational background includes a Bachelor's in Business Administration from Campbell University and a Master's of Science in Health Sciences: Emergency and Disaster Management.



Jeni De La Cruz is an online student in the Healthcare Administration program. Jeni plans to explore all options that healthcare administration has to offer, with the possibility of furthering her education in future.



Dr. Roxanne Beharie is an Assistant Professor with Ashford University. Dr. Beharie earned her doctorate in Public Health from Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. Dr. Beharie also earned a BS in Exercise Science from the University of Pittsburgh and an MPA in Health Services Management from Mercy College.

July

- Cord Blood Awareness Month
- Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month
- National Cleft & Craniofacial Awareness & Prevention Month
- 28 World Hepatitis Day

August

- Children's Eye Health and Safety Month
- National Breastfeeding Month
- National Immunization Awareness Month
- 1 - 7 World Breastfeeding Week
- 10 - 16 National Health Center Week

September

- Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
- National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month
- National Food Safety Education Month
- Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month
- Prostate Cancer Awareness Month
- 7 - 13 National Suicide Prevention Week
- 10 World Suicide Prevention Day
- 18 National HIV/AIDS and Aging Awareness Day
- 24 National Women's Health & Fitness Day™
- 27 Family Health & Fitness Day USA®
- 29 World Heart Day

Conferences

Stress Management Summit
July 13, 2015 | Philadelphia

AW-International Conference on Recent Advances in Medical and Health Sciences (ICRAMHS)
August 28, 2015 | New York

6th Annual Conference
Integrative Medicine for Mental Health
September 17-20, 2015 | San Diego

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References

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“While we may not be able to control all that happens to us, we can control what happens inside us.”

- Benjamin Franklin

Get to know the Health Promotion faculty in the College of Health, Human Services, and Science

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Program Chair: Dr. Erick Cervantes—Bachelor of Arts in Complementary and Alternative Health

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Dr. Charles Holmes

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Visit the COHHSS webpage for bios and more:

<http://www.ashford.edu/degrees/online/health.htm>

If you would like to be a part of future editions of the Health Promotion Quarterly newsletter, please email Dr. Roxanne Beharie at : roxanne.beharie@faculty.ashford.edu.

