



for
your

Spring 2009

Health

www.foreseehealth.com



There Are Ways to Save Money on Health Care

If you're worried about the cost of medical care, you are not alone. A recent poll found that people are extremely concerned about rising health care costs. The more costly medical care becomes, the less likely people might be to carry health insurance or seek care when they need it.

The good news is you can save on health care costs. Take these steps to ease the burden on your wallet:

■ **Adopt healthy habits.** You know what this means: Exercise at least 30 minutes most days; eat low-fat foods and a variety of fruits and vegetables each day; don't use tobacco; and if you drink alcohol, do so only in moderation. These actions might help you avoid the need for medical care.

■ **Seek preventive care.** Preventive services such as annual exams, flu shots, mammograms, and blood pressure checks can help prevent disease or lead to early detection.

■ **Ask for less expensive medications.**

Ask your doctor to prescribe generic drugs—which are less expensive than brand-name drugs—whenever possible. Many pharmacies have a low-cost generic program. Ask your pharmacist if your pharmacy has a low-cost generic program. If so, request a list of the low- or no-cost generic medications available. Show this list to your doctor at your next appointment to see if any of them would be appropriate for you.

■ **Call a nurse.** Many hospitals and health plans offer a 24-hour nurse line, a phone number patients can call for non-emergency medical concerns. Making this call might save you a trip to the doctor's office—along with the fee.

■ **Split tablets.** Tablet splitting can be an effective way to save on your prescription costs. Work closely with your doctor and pharmacist to ensure you know the right way to accurately split tablets, and that it's OK to split the drug in the first place. ●

IN THIS ISSUE

page 2
The Benefits of Weight Loss

Plan for End-of-Life Care

page 3
A Guide to a Healthy Heart

page 4
Spring into Shape with Asthma

Recipe

page 5
Control vs. Rescue Medications

Exercise Can Help Control Diabetes

page 6
Smoking Cessation Resources

Get the Skinny on the Health Benefits of Weight Loss

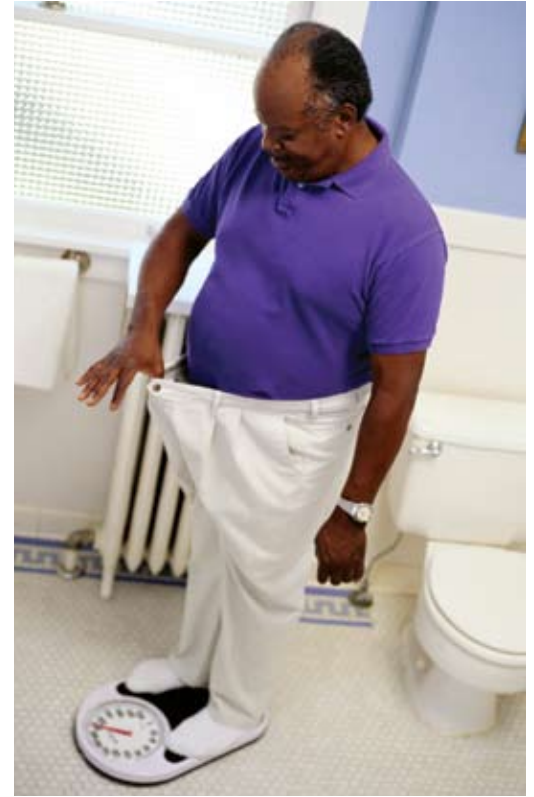
HEALTH TIP

Get involved in your own care. Take a tour of the Healthwise Knowledgebase and get to the information you and your family need to know. foreseehealth.com

Sure, dropping a few pounds can help you look and feel great. But the benefits go far beyond a smaller pair of jeans.

Reaching and maintaining a healthy weight:

- Decreases your cholesterol levels, which reduces your heart disease risk.
- For women, it helps regulate your period, makes it easier to get pregnant, and helps you have a safe pregnancy.
- Prevents diabetes. In one large trial, when overweight men and women lost an average of 7% of their weight, their risk for developing diabetes dropped by 58%.
- Wards off colorectal and breast cancer. Experts estimate that obesity can increase breast cancer risk as much as having a family history of breast cancer. Obese people have a higher risk of developing colorectal cancer than those with a normal weight. Reaching a healthy weight also cuts the risk of dying from these cancers.



- Protects your mental health. People at a healthy weight have a lower risk for anxiety disorders, phobias, depression, and drug or alcohol abuse.
- Decreases your blood pressure. Obese women are more than twice as likely as women of normal weight to have high blood pressure.
- Helps you stay active as you age. In one study, older women with more body fat were more likely to lose their mobility. ●

PLAN AHEAD FOR END-OF-LIFE CARE

It's never easy to talk about end-of-life issues. But planning ahead now will ensure peace of mind for you and your family in the future.

Use an advance directive to express your wishes for end-of-life care. A *living will* details what medical care you will want or won't want, such as life-prolonging treatments. A *health care power of attorney* appoints someone you trust to make decisions about your treatment if you're not able to do so.

Hospice is a type of end-of-life care that stresses quality of life—the idea that peace, comfort, and dignity are essential as life draws to a close. Palliative care is care given for the sake of managing pain and providing comfort for patients. It can be given at the same time as other therapies that treat diseases such as cancer or heart disease or can be given on its own if a patient has a terminal illness.



A Guide to a Healthy Heart

Your heart pumps life-giving blood to all the other organs. You can do a lot to take care of your heart throughout your life. When you do, it will help protect you against America's number one killer—heart disease. Follow the guide below to treat your heart right throughout life.

Children and Teens

- Feed your family heart-healthy foods, such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products.
- Teach teens to say no to cigarettes. Smoking significantly increases heart disease risk.

20s

- Get your blood pressure checked at every doctor visit and your cholesterol screened at least every five years. Check with your family

to see if there's a history of heart disease.

- Eat fish high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon or tuna, at least twice a week.

30s

- Manage stress. Avoid overeating or drinking in response, and try deep breathing or yoga instead.
- Quit smoking before you turn 40. You will add nine years to your life, and your risk for heart attack drops quickly.

40s

- Squeeze exercise into a busy schedule by making small changes. Take the stairs instead of the elevator, and park farther from the office or store. You still need 30 minutes of moderate exercise on most days to protect your heart.
- Ask your doctor about aspirin.

Aspirin therapy might help protect you from stroke. Talk with your doctor first before taking aspirin to ensure that it's the right strategy for you.

50s and Up

- It's not too late to quit smoking if you haven't yet. You can still cut your heart disease risk by as much as half.
- Control diabetes, if you have it. Keeping blood sugar low can help prevent cardiovascular damage.
- Your doctor may prescribe medications to treat or prevent high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or other heart-related conditions. Take them as directed.
- Maintain your exercise habit, which fights the stiffening of the arteries that occurs as you age—even if you don't start exercising until age 60 or 70. ●



HEALTH TIP

Remember to talk with your doctor about cancer screenings. A cancer-related checkup might include exams for cancers of the breast, colon, cervix, uterus, and prostate.

recipe:

Chicken Salad

This easy-to-make chicken salad is low in fat thanks to light mayonnaise and skinless chicken. Try it on your favorite bread for a healthy sandwich.

INGREDIENTS:

3¼ cups **chicken**, cooked, cubed, skinless
 ¼ cup **celery**, chopped
 1 tbsp. **lemon juice**
 ½ tsp. **onion powder**
 ⅛ tsp. **salt**
 3 tbsp. **light mayonnaise**

DIRECTIONS:

In a large bowl combine all ingredients. Mix well.

YIELD: 5 servings

SERVING SIZE: ¾ cup

EACH SERVING PROVIDES:

CALORIES: 183

TOTAL FAT: 7 g

SATURATED FAT: 2 g

CHOLESTEROL: 78 mg

SODIUM: 201 mg

Source: *National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute/National Institutes of Health*



Spring into Shape— Even with Asthma

Springtime is a great time to head outdoors for exercise, even if you have asthma. The key to exercising outdoors with asthma is knowing what triggers an attack and what to do to control your symptoms. Try these tips for springtime fitness:

- Talk with your doctor before beginning a new exercise program.
- Carry your quick relief medication when you exercise.
- Keep tabs on air quality. Check the radio, newspaper, or local newscast in your area for pollution and allergen levels. If the levels are high, exercise indoors, shorten your activity time, or decrease your intensity.
- If you're allergic to pollen, avoid exercising outdoors between 5 and 10

a.m. Exercise in the late afternoon or after a heavy rain, when pollen levels are typically lower.

In addition to avoiding triggers, you can select activities that are less likely to cause asthma attacks. Swimming is often a good option since it is done in warm, humid air and is an activity you can benefit from year-round. Choose your activities based upon your physical condition and exercise endurance. Walking, golf, leisurely biking, and hiking, for example, are safer bets for people with low endurance. On the other hand, sports that require continuous, vigorous activity, such as soccer, basketball, and long-distance running, are not recommended for people with low endurance. ●



Control vs. Rescue Medications: What's the Difference?

Knowing the difference between long-term control medicines and quick-relief rescue medications is important for people with respiratory diseases. Long-term control and preventive medications are used to treat respiratory disease daily, even if you don't have symptoms. They can help prevent respiratory disease attacks and permanent damage to your lungs. They also can lessen your reaction to certain triggers. Common examples of controller medications include inhaled corticosteroids, leukotriene modifiers such as Singulair, long-acting beta-2 agonists such as Foradil, and anticholinergics such as Atrovent and Theophylline.

Quick-relief rescue medications help when you feel like your respiratory disease is suddenly worsening, and also work to treat attacks. Examples of quick-relief medications include inhaled short-acting beta-2 agonists such as albuterol HFA (various brand-names) and Xopenex and anticholinergics such as Atrovent. Anti-inflammatory oral

corticosteroids, such as prednisone or methylprednisolone, also can help treat a respiratory disease attack. While these medications will provide symptom relief, it is important to know that daily use may indicate that your disease is not under control. Talk to your doctor about adjusting your long-term control medications.

All respiratory disease medications can have side effects. For example, inhaled corticosteroids can lead to a cough, thrush, osteoporosis and slow growth among children. Singulair can cause drowsiness, headache and, in rare cases, liver damage. Theophylline can trigger nausea and vomiting. Your doctor might need to change your prescription because of side effects.

Take only the prescribed doses of your rescue and control medication. Schedule regular checkups with your doctor to make sure your medicines are still helping control your respiratory disease. Contact your doctor if your symptoms are worsening. ●

EXERCISE CAN HELP CONTROL DIABETES

Would you like a way to lower blood sugar, drop excess weight, and prevent the heart problems and bone fractures that often strike people with diabetes? Get moving! Physical activity helps your body control blood sugar. A single bout of aerobic exercise can have a favorable effect on how your body uses insulin for 24 to 72 hours.

It's ideal to exercise at least 30 minutes a day. Other tips include:

- Testing your blood sugar and checking your feet for sores or blisters before and after exercising
- Drinking plenty of water before, during, and afterward
- Packing a snack in case your blood sugar level drops
- Carry some form of ID that identifies you as a diabetic, especially when exercising alone.

If you have diabetes, talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Asthma and Allergies

American Academy of Allergy,
Asthma & Immunology
www.aaaai.org

Asthma and Allergy Foundation
of America
www.aafa.org

Environmental Protection Agency
Air Quality Index
www.epa.gov/airnow

National Institute of Environmental
Health Sciences
www.niehs.nih.gov

National Institute of Allergy
and Infectious Diseases
www3.niaid.nih.gov

Smoking Cessation

American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org
800-ACS-2345

American Lung Association
www.lungusa.org
800-LUNG-USA

National network of tobacco
cessation quitlines
www.naquitline.org
800-QUITNOW (800-784-8669)

Diabetes

American Diabetes Association
www.diabetes.org

National Institute of Diabetes and
Digestive and Kidney Diseases
www.niddk.nih.gov

Heart Disease

American Heart Association
www.americanheart.org

NHLBI: Keep the Beat Heart
Healthy Recipes
[www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/
public/heart/other/ktb_recipebk/
ktb_recipebk.pdf](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/other/ktb_recipebk/ktb_recipebk.pdf)



Would you tie a wet, dirty rag over your mouth and run up and down four flights of stairs? With boots on? On a hot day?

If you keep smoking, your lungs won't feel any different. Smoking affects you, inside and out. Look great. Feel great. Quit now.

Damage to the lungs begins early in smokers. Short-term effects include shortness of breath and nagging coughs. Long-term, smoking is a major cause of many types of cancers, heart disease, aneurysms, COPD, and stroke.

When you stop smoking you'll feel better. Your lungs will thank you for it. So, why not give it a try? Call **866-424-8555** today. We're here to help you.

We want to hear from you! What topics would you like to see in *For Your Health*? Please call **877-4-FORESEE (877-436-7373)**, e-mail info@foreseehealth.com, or write us at ForeSee Health ATTN: Newsletter Department, 14528 S. Outer Forty Road, Suite 300, Chesterfield, Missouri 63017.