

YOUR QUARTERLY
BRAIN FOOD

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Preventing Winter allergies
- Radon: The Silent Killer
- Healthy Holiday Eating Tips
- December—February Health Events Calendars

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:

Ringing in the New Year	4
Healthy Hearts, Healthy Minds	6
Reducing Your Risk	7
Preventing the Winter Blues	8
Too Sick to Go to Work?	9
Healthy Holiday Recipe	12

COG Health Quarterly

The Winter Edition

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DECEMBER '12 - FEBRUARY '13

World AIDS Day: Where We Are Today



December 1st 2012 marks the 24th anniversary of World AIDS Day, an initiative put forth by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1988. Since then, the World AIDS Day campaign has grown into its own entity and is considered to be one of the most recognizable health observances throughout the world. This speaks to the breadth and scope of the disease it intends to

cure. Thirty-one years after the first cases of HIV/AIDS were clinically documented in 1981, the virus is still considered to be one of the most serious and life-threatening health challenges facing much of the world. This year's theme is "Working Together for an AIDS Free Generation", where the United Nations (UN) has set goals to reduce HIV transmission by half by 2015.

Today there are currently 33.4 million people living with HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that the virus is responsible for killing roughly 30 million people since the first cases were reported in 1981. The virus

is considered a global pandemic, although it disproportionately affects those living in low-to-middle income countries, which account for 97% of the HIV positive population. Nowhere is this problem more pronounced than sub-Saharan Africa, wherein several nations experience prevalence rates above 10% of the total population. To put this into perspective, consider that the UN classifies an epidemic-level threshold rate as $\geq 1\%$ of the population. In the United States, we still experience a huge dis-

Continued on page 3

Preventing Weight Gain During the Holiday Season

For the next several weeks, through the end of the year, time will be spent in shopping lines and at office and family holiday parties in celebration of the season. It is time for people to come together and reflect on the past year, and enjoy the company of those around them in the jovial spirits of the holidays. In the U.S., research has shown that it is also a time of serial overeating, which for many people, can result in pounds of weight gain. Studies have linked the 6-



week period of the holiday season to minimal weight gain. On average, the magnitude of weight gain over the 6-week period spanning from Thanksgiving through New Years was only .8 lbs. However by further stratification of the study populations based on body mass index (BMI), one study showed that 14% of participants classified as overweight or obese gained an average of 5 lbs through the season.

Continued on page 2

“51% of annual weight gain can be attributed to the 6-week holiday season”

Preventing Weight Gain cont'd



From page 1

Additionally, the study demonstrated that 51% of annual weight gain can be attributed to the 6-week holiday season.

While the magnitude of weight gain during a single holiday season is relatively minimal, the importance of the results should not be understated. The inability for participants to lose holiday weight can lead to accumulation of the excess poundage each year, which may lead to increased risk for obesity over the lifetime. There are steps you can take to avoid continuous holiday weight gain below.

Healthy Holiday Eating Tips

- 1- Be realistic:** Do not try to continue dieting throughout the holiday season. Do your best to eat smart and avoid overeating which leads to weight gain.
- 2- Eat before attending a party:** Eat a light snack such as a piece of fruit or raw veggies before going to a party. You will be less likely to overindulge on unhealthy snacks while at the party.
- 3- Be mindful of beverage intake:** Alcoholic beverages tend to have more calories and produce lower inhibitions that induce overeating. One cup of eggnog contains about 400 calories.
- 4- Focus on Conversation:** Parties are full of family and friends. Spend less time snacking and more time in conversation with your loved ones.
- 5- Plan Time for Exercise:** Exercise can be a good way to stay calorie neutral and provide a good outlet for holiday stress relief.

World AIDS Day cont'd

(world, from pg 1)

-parity in terms of affected populations. As a group, men who have sex with men (MSM) bear the brunt of the risk, making up 61% of all new infections in the U.S. White MSM accounted for the largest number of annual novel infection rates for any group. Disparities in risk of infection can be applied by ethnic makeup as well. African Americans and Hispanics are disproportionately impacted by the virus. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1 in 16 black men and 1 in 32 black women will be diagnosed with HIV in their lifetimes. Additionally, Latinos accounted for 20% of all news cases of HIV in 2009, but only represented roughly 16% of the U.S. population.

Washington, D.C. has been particularly impacted by HIV. DC has the highest HIV prevalence rate of any state in the U.S. **At 2.7% of the population in the district living with HIV, it is on par with the rates of some developing nations** and easily exceeds the epidemic threshold set forth by the UN. A total of 14,465 people in the district were living with HIV in 2010, 89% of which were linked to care, thereby reducing their risk of transmission. According to health officials though, DC is a microcosm of what is happening throughout the nation in terms of viral management. The epidemic can be partly attributed to the geographic makeup of the district; characterized by a small

area with overlapping sexual networks that fuel transmission, which when combined with disparities in access to quality health-care, poverty, and drug use result in the burden of disease DC residents presently face.

The news is not all bad however. WHO estimates that in general, rates of infection are declining worldwide. Efforts to promote awareness and increase access to anti-retroviral treatments (ART) have begun to make a measurable impact, with an estimated 4 million people worldwide receiving treatment in 2008. In the U.S, the CDC claims that while the overall prevalence of HIV in the U.S has increased in recent

years, the rates of new infections have remained relatively stable. In the district, the budget for HIV/AIDs for FY 2012 was a reflection of the significance of the issue, with \$75.6 million dedicated to prevention, testing, treatment and care.

For More Information on HIV Education Initiatives and testing centers in the DC metro area, visit the sites listed below:

1) **HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD and TB Administration (HAHSTA)**

<http://dctakesonhiv.com/>

2) **The DC Center**

http://thedccenter.org/programs_fighthivindc.html

3) **DC Care**

<http://www.dccare.org/>

December 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 World AIDS Day
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 Christmas	26	27	28	29
30	31 New Year's Eve					

Calendar of Events

Dec 1 World AIDS Day: Someone is infected with HIV every 9.5 minutes in the U.S. Learn more at www.aids.gov

Safe Toys and Gifts Month: every year thousands of young children suffer serious eye injuries due to inappropriate toys. Learn more at www.kidshealth.org

Dec 2 – 8 National Hand washing Awareness Week: join Henry the Hand as he discusses the four principles of hand awareness. Learn more at www.henrythehand.com

“Efforts such as the WRAP SoberRide have proven successful in assisting individuals who are unable to drive”

Ringling in the New Year Safely

The final chapter of 2012 is quickly approaching. People all over the world will be bringing in the New Year with a celebratory toast or standing in large crowds as the ball drops. However, it is important to remember that while New Year's Eve can be exciting, it is one of the most dangerous days of the year for alcohol related car accidents. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 54% of all New Year's Day accident deaths and 38% of all Christmas-time deaths are alcohol-related. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that nationally, more fatal drunk-driving car crashes occur at night (36%) and on the weekend (31%) -- just when holiday parties are most likely to be held. In the National Capitol Region, we have snow, ice, and the rest of winter's fury adding to the hazards on our roads and highways.

Efforts such as the Washington Regional Alcohol Program's (WRAP) [SoberRide](#) have proven successful in assisting individuals who are unable to drive. WRAP's SoberRide, called one of the nation's most successful free cab ride programs for would-be impaired drivers, has helped to ensure greater Washington, DC residents have a safe way home on high-risk holidays. Since 1993, WRAP has provided over **55,851** safe rides home. SoberRide provides a FREE ride HOME (up to a \$30 fare).

New Year's is also the most hazardous day for pedestrians, with more pedestrians



dying on New Year's Day than any other day. Dr. Joseph Braverman, Director of the Weiler Division of the Montefiore Emergency Department in New York City stated, "While the greater frequency of alcohol related accidents is car-to-car, there are also many cases of patients injured by motor vehicles while walking, either as a result of their own lack of caution, or if they or the driver had been drinking." Whether you're staying in and celebrating with friends and family, or you're traveling to a party, following a few safety tips will ensure that you're safe and sound when the clock strikes midnight, ringing in the New Year!

Here are a few tips to help you bring in the New Year Safely!

- Before drinking, designate a sober driver.
- Designate a driver who will stay sober and be responsible for getting everyone home safely.
- If you drink, call a cab or sober friend or relative to pick you up.
- If you see a suspected drunk driver on the road, call 911 immediately.
- Serve plenty of food – particularly protein, like meats, cheeses and nuts.
- If you plan on driving home, moderate your drinking throughout the night and stop drinking 2-3 hours before you get on the road.
- Use public transportation or take a cab using a program such as [SoberRide](#) that provides free cab rides home on New Year's Eve.
- Drop your keys. If you know you'll drink, leave your keys with someone so you aren't tempted to drive later on in the night.
- Pack an overnight bag and stay at a friend or family member's house. If you're going to party hard or late into the evening, you won't be alert and sober enough to drive until the morning.
- Even if you aren't drinking and driving, it doesn't mean there aren't others on the road who are. Be mindful of all traffic and drive
- Always travel with a group or in pairs. With the festivities in full force around you, traveling with someone else will ensure you are never by yourself at any time.

Have fun and Be safe!

**SoberRide:
1-800-200-TAXI**

For a FREE ride home (up to a \$30 fare) 10:00pm—6:00am nightly from December 14 2012—January 1 2013

Radon: The Silent Killer

Radon is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas. It is also considered to be the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States.

Radon occurs naturally from the radioactive decay of uranium and thorium found in the earth's crust. Radon can be found in rocks, soil, and even in ground water in some cases. It is most commonly found in the highly populated Northeastern United States.

Due to the omnipresence of radon in the environment, one can never fully prevent exposure to radon. However, in the ambient air, radon levels are relatively low.

Radon levels can become dangerously high inside buildings and structures with poor ventilation, such as basements and wells. Cracks in the basement floor or the foundation of a home have been associated with high levels of radon.

Radon is considered to be a class A carcinogen, meaning it is known to cause cancer in humans. The link between radon exposure and lung cancer is demonstrated through the radioactive decay of radon progeny, which emit high energy alpha particles. Alpha particles are byproducts of radioactive

decay, which when inhaled can cause severe damage to the chromosomes within the epithelial cells of the lung. This chromosomal damage can cause mutation and result in malignant growth.

Protecting yourself from radon exposure is important. The first step is understanding your level of risk. Radon test kits can be purchased to test the threshold levels in your home and office. Follow the steps outlined in the link below to assess your risk and decide whether action needs to be taken.

www.epa.gov/radon/nram/

January 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 National	9 Folic	10 Acid	11 Awareness	12 Week
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Calendar of Events

Cervical Cancer Awareness Month: Cervical cancer affects over 14,000 women each year. Learn more at www.nccco-online.org/index.php/january.

National Birth Defects Prevention Month: This year's theme focuses on congenital heart defects, the most common birth defect. Learn more at www.nbdpn.org.

National Glaucoma Awareness Month: More than 2.2 million adults age 40 and over suffer from glaucoma. Learn more at www.preventblindness.org.

National Radon Action Month: Prolonged radon exposure is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. behind smoking. Learn more at www.epa.gov/radon/nram/.

National Stalking Awareness Month: Stalking affects 3.4 million adults each year. Learn more at www.stalkingawarenessmonth.org/about.

Thyroid Awareness Month: As many as 30 million people may have a thyroid disorder, although half go undiagnosed. Learn more at www.thyroidawareness.com/.

Jan 8-14: National Folic Acid Awareness Week. Folic acid deficiencies are responsible for neural tube defects among babies, of which 50-70% could be prevented. Learn more at www.folicacidinfo.org.

“Heart
disease is
responsible
for over
600,000
deaths
each year.”

Healthy Hearts, Healthy Minds

February is American Heart Month. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States.

According to the latest surveillance published by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), heart disease is responsible for over 600,000 deaths annually. That translates to 1 out of every 4 deaths in the United States being attributed to heart disease each year.

New research published in August 2012 by the Harvard Women's Health Watch has suggested that what you eat may not only affect your heart health, but that diet may also be linked to individual risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

It is well known that diet affects heart health. Dietary patterns high in saturated fats and cholesterol show strong correlations in terms of increased cardiovascular disease risk. The etiology of poor dietary patterns on heart disease risk can be explained through the accumulation of plaques and Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) molecules that cause the narrowing of the arterial walls, a condition known atherosclerosis. Saturated fats are especially bad, because they also carry high calorie contents which promotes obesity, another major risk factor for heart disease and other co-morbidities such as Type 2 diabetes.

The Harvard Study, conducted by researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital, performed three sets of cognitive functioning tests on a cohort of 6000 women aged 65 years and older, carried

out every two years with an average total testing time of 4 years. The women were also required to fill out detailed food frequency surveys prior to the cognitive scans.

What the researchers found was that the women in the study who ate more saturated fat were more likely to show significant signs of mild-cognitive impairment (MCI), characterized as an early stage of memory loss that often precedes dementia, over the four years of testing. The research suggested that diets high in saturated fats, which come from animal products such as red meat and butter, were linked to lower cognitive functioning. Additionally, through further examination of the cohort, researchers found that women with dietary patterns high in monounsaturated fats, found in olive oil and nuts, performed better on cognitive tests over time.

So what is it that causes saturated fats to effect memory and cognitive abilities? And why does regular consumption of monounsaturated fats seem to produce the opposite effect?

The answer seems to be relatively unclear to researchers, although they believe that cholesterol levels in the blood may play an important role.

There are established links between the higher cholesterol levels in the blood caused by LDLs through increased saturated fat intake. Researchers think this can lead to the accumulation of plaque in the brain known as beta-amyloid protein clumps, a hall-



mark of Alzheimer's disease. These beta-amyloid plaques build up around the nerve cells, and cause disruptions in communications between neural pathways and eventual death of the affected neurons.

The link between monounsaturated fats and decreased risk of dementia seems to have a similar explanation. Regular intake of monounsaturated fats have been previously associated with decreased risk of Alzheimer's disease and MCI. The clinical explanation is again related the chemistry of the blood, where monounsaturated fats are linked to high levels of High-density lipoproteins (HDLs). HDLs, often referred to as “the good cholesterol”, help to regulate levels of LDL in the bloodstream, as well as aid in repair of the inner walls of the blood vessels, which when left damaged promote the development of atherosclerosis.

While the direct link between diet and cognitive decline remains unclear, there have been established links between diet and heart health.

To learn more, visit :

<http://www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers/>

February 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 National Wear Red Day	4 World Cancer Day	5	6	7 National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

Calendar of Events

AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month: AMD is the leading cause of vision loss in the U.S. Learn more at www.preventblindness.org

Heart Month: Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S. Learn more at www.heart.org

National Children's Dental Health Month: Dental caries among children are on the rise in the U.S., reversing a trend seen since 1970s. Learn more at www.ada.org

Teen Dating Violence Prevention Awareness Month: One quarter of high school girls have been victims of physical or sexual abuse. Learn more at www.teendvmonth.org

Feb 3: National Wear Red Day. Nearly 1 in 2 women has high or borderline high cholesterol. Learn more at www.nhlbi.nih.gov

Feb 4: World Cancer Day. Cancer is a global epidemic, affecting all populations throughout the world. Learn more at www.worldcancerday.org

Feb 7: National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. American blacks are disproportionately affected by HIV, accounting for 44% of all new infection each year. Learn more at www.blackaidsday.org

Reducing Your Risk of Heart Disease

Heart Disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. It is responsible for 1 out of every 4 deaths in the U.S. It is leading cause of death across both genders and for most ethnicities. Many people have had personal experience with heart disease or know someone who has. Outlined below are simple steps you can take to reduce your risk recommended by the Center's for Disease Control and Prevention.

Eat a healthy diet. Choosing healthful meal and snack options can help you avoid heart disease and its complications. Be sure to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Eating foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol and high in fiber can help prevent high blood cholesterol. Limiting salt or sodium in your diet can also lower your blood pressure.



Maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight or obese can increase your risk for heart disease. To determine whether your weight is in a healthy range, doctors often calculate a number called the [body mass index](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/) (BMI). Doctors sometimes also use waist and hip measurements to measure a person's excess

body fat.

Exercise regularly. Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower cholesterol and blood pressure. The Surgeon General recommends that adults should engage in moderate-intensity exercise for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.

Don't smoke. Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease. So, if you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, quitting will lower your risk for heart disease. Your doctor can suggest ways to help you quit.

Limit alcohol use. Avoid drinking too much alcohol, which causes high blood pressure.

<http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/>



Quick Tips for Preventing Winter Allergies

When it gets cold and your furnace kicks on, it sends dust, mold spores, and insect parts into the air. They can get into your nose and trigger a reaction.

Common allergy triggers are:

- Dust mites: these microscopic bugs flourish in mattresses and bedding. Their droppings can trigger allergy symptoms
- Mold: this fungus thrives in damp, humid areas such as basements and bathrooms. When mold spores get into the air they can trigger allergy symptoms
- Animals: most people are not allergic to animal fur, but to a protein found in pet dander, saliva, and urine.

The following tips can help control allergy symptoms:

- Throw out shower curtains, wallpaper, or carpeting that have mold. Wash showers and sinks with a solution containing 5% bleach and a little detergent
- To help control dust mites and mold, use a dehumidifier to keep the humidity in your home below 50%
- Use a HEPA air filter to clean dust from air
- Wash bedding in hot water each week. Use allergy proof covers on mattresses, pillows, and comforters

WebMd 2012 <http://www.webmd.com/allergies/guide/winter-allergies>

SAD: Avoiding The Winter Blues

If your mood gets worse as the weather gets chillier and the days get shorter, you may have seasonal affective disorder, or SAD. The National Institute for Mental Health first identified SAD in 1984. The condition is marked by the onset of depression during the late fall and early winter months, when less natural sunlight is available.

Some people have depression year-round that gets worse in the winter; others have SAD alone, struggling with low moods only in the cooler, darker months. SAD affects up to 3% of the U.S population, mostly women.

Symptoms of SAD can include:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Sleeping too much
- Experiencing fatigue in the daytime
- Weight gain
- Decreased interest in social activities

Things one can do to minimize winter depression:

- Light therapy: light therapy has been proven effective to treat seasonal depression. It can be used in combination with talk therapy, and supplements of the hormone melatonin. Light therapy involves using light boxes indoors.
- Getting outdoors in sunlight also helps some people with depression symptoms, as well as getting regular exercise, maintaining social activity, and talking with friends
- Resisting the urge to overeat, and eat a healthy mix of lean protein and complex carbohydrate foods.

Visit your doctor if you feel down for days at a time and can't seem to get motivated to do activities you normally enjoyed.

WebMD 2012, <http://www.webmd.com/depression/winter-depression-treatment>



Too Sick to Go to Work?

Take the quiz below to help you decide whether you should go to work or stay home when you're not feeling well:

1. You woke up this morning with a sore throat and a runny nose. You may have:
 - A) A cold
 - B) The flu
2. If you have the flu, when are you contagious?
 - A) Two days before you get sick
 - B) One day before and up to seven days after you get sick
 - C) Four days before and four days after you get sick
3. You should stay home from work if:
 - A) You have a fever
 - B) Your symptoms interfere with your job
 - C) You're coughing a lot
 - D) You're contagious
 - E) All of the above
4. If you have to go to work when you're sick, you should:
 - A) Take plenty of Echinacea
 - B) Wear a warm sweater
 - C) Always cough or sneeze into a tissue and wash hands frequently
 - D) Bring chicken soup for lunch
5. Flu symptoms usually last
 - A) Two or three days
 - B) A week to 10 days
 - C) A month
 - D) More than a month
6. When are you most likely to get the flu?
 - A) October
 - B) December
 - C) February
 - D) May
7. The best way to avoid getting sick is to:
 - A) Take plenty of vitamin C
 - B) Wash your hands often
 - C) Wear a hat when it's cold outside
 - D) Use a neti pot regularly
8. Cold symptoms tend to come on gradually, while the flu comes on suddenly
 - A) True
 - B) False
9. The average cold lasts:
 - A) Two days
 - B) One week
 - C) Two weeks
 - D) Longer than two weeks
10. How many colds can you expect to have in a year?
 - A) One or less
 - B) Two to four
 - C) Five to seven
 - D) Eight to ten
11. If you smoke, you're more likely to get a cold
 - A) True
 - B) False
12. Who is mostly likely to get complications from the flu?
 - A) Pregnant women
 - B) The elderly
 - C) Young children
 - D) People with chronic illness
 - E) All of the above

Answers on page 12

From WebMD <http://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/rm-quiz-cold-flu-sick-work> 2012



Winter for the Fitness-Minded: Woeful or Wonderful?

Tips to stay motivated and fit through the dark days of winter

By Margie Shapiro, Potomac River Running Inc.

Focusing on fitness requires discipline and motivation at any time of year, but particularly during the winter months. Seemingly endless holiday parties, bitterly cold weather, and limited daylight can wreak havoc even on an exercise addict's routine. Running in particular may seem a greater challenge this time of year. We've come up with some simple tips for making healthy choices even during the toughest of times.



- **DRESS RIGHT:** It's much easier to get out the door for a cold winter run when dressed properly. Runners or outdoor exercisers find great comfort in **LAYERS**, with synthetic moisture-wicking materials, especially closest to the skin. Start out a run with the flexibility to remove layers as needed. Also include a good set of gloves or mittens and a hat or ear warmer. You might choose some slightly thicker socks as well – avoid cotton!
- **WEAR PROPER SHOES:** Running shoes should be selected based on your foot shape and biomechanics, not color or appearance. Nothing beats a well-fitting pair of shoes when it comes to running comfort.
- **OUTFIT YOURSELF WITH SAFETY FEATURES:** If running in the early morning or at twilight, you'll be much safer with some reflective gear or a small light. Running in the dark can be exhilarating as long as you're safe!
- **SET A GOAL:** One of the best ways to stay motivated during the winter months is with an early-spring goal. Pick a road race (from 5k to marathon) for which to train, or set a weight-loss goal and give ample time to achieve it (it is realistic to lose about 1 pound per week).
- **GO WITH A GROUP:** Enlist the partnership of a friend to keep you accountable, or join a club or class to benefit from the company of others. Exercising alone can be enjoyable, but sometimes a group setting is even more fun, particularly if motivation is a problem. It can be safer too.
- **CREATE HEALTHY PARTY HABITS:** Since the body stores excess dietary carbohydrate as fat, knowing and choosing some low-carb options at parties will allow you to partake without overdoing it. You don't have to go hungry; just seek out simple foods like raw vegetables, and lean protein sources, and limit the amount of breads, starches, and sweets you consume. Also, remember alcohol packs a major caloric punch: enter the party with a reasonable limit in mind if you plan to imbibe at all.
- **ENJOY IT:** Remember what a privilege it is to have a healthy body and healthy mind. When exercise feels like a drag, remind yourself how great you'll feel afterward. You WILL!

=PR=

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Avoid iPod Hearing Loss

Noise induced hearing loss occurs when tiny sensory hair cells in our inner ears, known as stereocilia are damaged by noises that are too loud and that last for too long. To reduce the possibility of noise-induced hearing loss from hearing devices such as iPods, follow these tips:

- Don't listen so loudly. Anything louder than 70% of maximum volume of your iPod over an extended period is risky
- Use volume control: Apple offers a volume limit setting for some iPods
- Limit your listening: the length of time can also contribute to hearing loss.
- Use the 60/60 rule: listen to an iPod for 60 minutes at 60% maximum volume and then take a break. Ears that rest can recover
- Don't use earbuds: earbuds can cause more damage than headphones that sit over the ears
- Never max it out: avoid this at all costs.



About.com 2012 <http://ipod.about.com/od/generalmaintenance/a/avoiding-ipod-hearing-loss.htm>

6 Ways to Avoid Injury While Shoveling Snow



1. Warm-up: before digging in, jog in place or run up stairs
2. Use an ergonomic shovel: they are typically lighter and have handles designed to reduce or eliminate bending and decrease lifting
3. Use proper shoveling technique: push snow instead of lifting it, and do not overload shovel. If you have to lift, bend knees and lift with the legs. Avoid twisting or throwing snow over your shoulder
4. Take breaks, every 15 minutes or so
5. Listen to your body, pay attention to pain or shortness of breath
6. Don't shovel if you are not physically active or have a history of a heart condition.

LiveScience ® 2012 <http://www.livescience.com/6081-6-tips-avoid-injury-shoveling-snow.html>



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON Council of Governments

In the next issue:

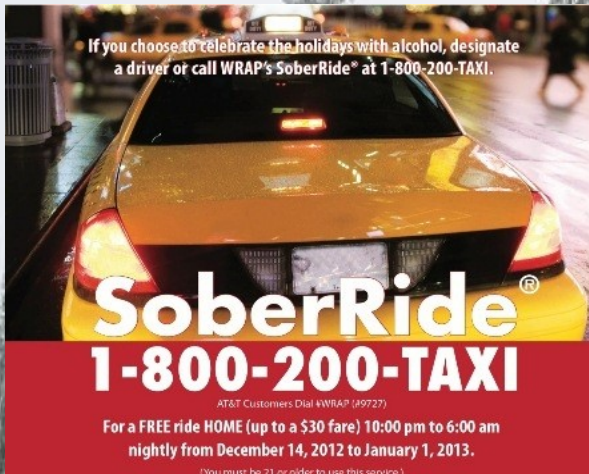
- Protecting Your Colon
- World Health Day
- Osteoarthritis: A Growing Epidemic
- Addressing Comorbidities: Celiac's Disease and Arthritis

We want to hear from you!

Please send any feedback or suggestions to
health@mwkog.org.

Brought to you by the Department of Public Safety and
Health: Health and Substance Abuse Programs

If you choose to celebrate the holidays with alcohol, designate a driver or call WRAP's SoberRide® at 1-800-200-TAXI.



SoberRide®
1-800-200-TAXI

AT&T Customers Dial 4WRAP (49727)

For a FREE ride HOME (up to a \$30 fare) 10:00 pm to 6:00 am
nightly from December 14, 2012 to January 1, 2013.

(You must be 21 or older to use this service.)

Recipe of the Quarter

Roasted Carrots with Cardamom Butter



Roasting these carrots with only a bit of butter and some cardamom gives them a rich, nutty flavor that belies how healthy they are. A single serving gives you over 600 percent of the daily recommendation for vitamin A!

- 4 teaspoons butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 pounds carrots, peeled and cut diagonally into 1/4-inch-thick slices

Preparation

Position rack in lower third of oven; preheat to 450°F. Combine butter, oil, cardamom and salt in a medium bowl. Add carrots and toss well to coat. Spread evenly on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast the carrots, stirring twice, until tender and golden, about 30 minutes. Serve immediately.

Recipe from Eatingwell.com

Answers to Quiz (pg 9)

1. A) a cold: it's probably a cold but it could be the flu. Colds and flu share symptoms, but you'll have milder symptoms with a cold. Fever, severe body aches, and intense fatigue are more likely to be the flu.
2. B) One day before and up to seven days after you get sick: with the flu, you're contagious a day before you start to feel sick and up to seven days after that. It's possible to spread the flu before you even realize you have it.
3. E) All of the above: if you have the flu, you should stay home until your fever has been gone for 24 hours without fever medication. If you have a cold, it depends on how you feel. If your symptoms are bad enough to interfere with your job performance, you're coughing a lot, or you just feel bad, stay home and rest. Whether you have the cold or flu, remember that you are contagious.
4. C) Always cough or sneeze into a tissue and wash hands frequently; if you must absolutely go to work when you're sick, try to avoid spreading germs to others. Always cough or sneeze into a tissue or the crook of your elbow, and wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water.
5. B) A week to 10 days: if you get the flu, you can expect to get better in about a week. However, the flu can lead to more serious illnesses like pneumonia. You should see a health care professional right away if you're having trouble breathing, chest pain, if you're dizzy or confused, or if your symptoms go away and then come back and get worse.
6. C) February: winter is flu season, although flu outbreaks can happen anytime between October and April.
7. B) Wash your hands often: the number 1 way to avoid getting sick is to wash hands frequently with warm water and soap, or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Also avoid touching your face with your hands and avoid touching sick people. The best way to avoid the flu is to get an annual flu vaccine.
8. A) True: you'll often feel a cold coming on over a few days, but the flu hits quickly. Severe symptoms develop within three to six hours.
9. B) One week: a cold can last anywhere from two days to two weeks, but most last about a week.
10. B) Two to four: generally adults get two to four colds a year; most children get six to ten colds a year.
11. A) True: smokers are more likely than non-smokers to catch colds and their symptoms may be worse.
12. E) All of the above: young people, adults over 65, pregnant women, people with weakened immune systems, and people with chronic conditions such as asthma, lung disease and heart disease are at highest risk for flu complications. The flu vaccine is important for these groups.