

HEALTH

Get Moving to Hold Off Winter Weight

(story) Starting or maintaining a fitness plan can be a challenge during the winter months. Harsh weather conditions and fewer hours of sunlight can cause a person's dedication to drop faster than the temperatures. But please don't pack away your sneakers until the spring!

Regular physical activity can reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, some cancers, Type II diabetes, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. It can improve your ability to perform daily tasks, keep you mentally sharp, and help you avoid injuries. Exercise during the winter can also help you dodge the seasonal sniffles. Regular activity appears to boost the immune system, making it easier for your body to handle wintertime bugs. Flu vaccination and frequent hand-washing can also help keep you healthy.

For Your Health



BY DR. GERALD F. JOSEPH

Weight gain is a reality for many Americans during the holiday season. Over the years, those extra pounds can add up, often contributing to the 20-30 pounds that most Americans gain during adulthood. Exercise can help you balance the number of calories that you eat with the number of calories that you burn, so you can enjoy some treats without the negative consequences.

The shorter days of fall and winter cause seasonal affective disorder, a condition marked by symptoms such as tiredness, irritability, cravings for complex carbohydrates (such as bread and pasta), and depression.

Exercise is one of the best natural antidepressants around and can help relieve stress and anxiety and improve your mood. It can induce a calming effect by raising body temperature and increasing blood flow to the brain. Exercise can also help lower levels of stress

hormones and boost levels of the feel-good hormones.

At least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (like brisk walking or bicycling) on most days of the week are recommended to lower the risk of chronic disease; 60 minutes on most days of the week to maintain weight; and at least 60 to 90 minutes a day to lose weight.

If you can't get a full workout in every day, try raking leaves, vacuuming or taking the stairs. Or winterize your workout with cold weather activities such as skiing. Any physical activity helps, so fight your inner couch potato this winter and get moving.

Dr. Gerald F. Joseph Jr. is president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Free Glaucoma Screenings at Legacy

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness. In the U.S., more than 2.25 million people over the age of 45 have glaucoma and half of these are undiagnosed.

Devers Eye Institute at Legacy Health will conduct free visual field screenings this month as part of National Glaucoma Awareness Month. The screenings will test for glaucoma

and other serious diseases of the eye. The process is painless and takes only a few minutes to complete.

"Although there is no cure for glaucoma, early detection leads to earlier treatment which can significantly delay or stop further visual loss," said Dr. Jack Cioffi, Chenoweth Chair of Ophthalmology at Legacy Good Samaritan

Devers Eye Institute.

"We strongly urge anyone interested and especially those in high-risk groups such as African-Americans, Hispanics, Native-Americans, Asians, people older than 60 and people with diabetes, to take advantage of this free screening service."

To sign-up for the free screening, call 503-335-3500 or 360-487-3500.

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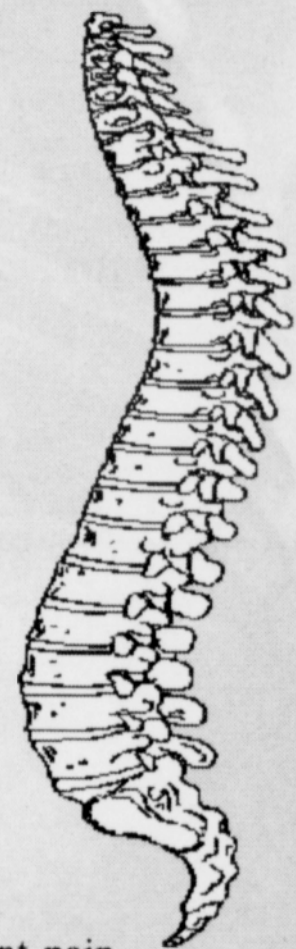


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