



Hands of Health Newsletter

January/February 2006

Hello, again:

And so begins another year. Hope it doesn't fly by as quickly as 2005 did! Still, Happy New Year! As always make health your #1 priority and so be sure and get into see me for your massage. And while you're at it be sure you are exercising regularly, 4-5x per week, and watching your diet: **NO** fried foods, lots of fresh vegetables and fruits, preferably organically grown, whole grains meaning brown rice as opposed to white rice, buckwheat groats, millet, barley and so on, also preferably organically grown. Oh, and remember to drink lots of WATER! Also, get enough rest. You allow your car or truck to get rest and have regular maintenance performed on it. Well, you have to do the same to your body. The only difference is if you neglect your vehicles and they break down and are irreparable you can go out and buy a new one. But if you wear out your body, where are you going to live? So have regular maintenance care on your body through massage therapy and the other methods I spoke about above. And so on to this issue's article. If you've been reading my newsletter regularly you know what my themes usually are and this is no different. Of course I found it online. So read it and learn or be reminded.

10 THINGS THAT AGE YOU

Cosmetic surgery might be the quickest way to reclaim a young, healthy look, but it's not the only way. If you focus on correcting the behaviors that add years and harm your health, you can turn back the clock. Here, the 10 unhealthy behaviors mentioned most often by anti-aging experts - and how to reform yourself.

Feeling overwhelmed by stress - Since cavetion times, we've known excess stress lowers our immunity, boosts the risk of heart disease and generally makes you feel crummy. But now Elissa S. Epel, PhD, a professor of psychiatry at the University of California at San Francisco, has cell-level proof that too much stress triggers premature aging of the immune system. Mothers of chronically ill children who felt most stressed, she found, had the most extreme early aging of these cells. To unwind? "The first step is realizing you are stressed and noticing the signs - you might feel your heart racing, or feel sweaty," Dr. Epel says. "The short-term way to reduce stress is to do deep breathing." The longer-term fix: "Make time in your life to do things that reduce stress.

Drinking too much alcohol - or drinking too little - It is no accident that alcohol advice is following the bad news about stress. Putting your feet up and having a tall cold one is actually good for you. One or two drinks a day can lower the risk of dying from heart disease by a third or so, a study in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* found. Women are advised to limit intake to one a day, men to two. But don't imbibe more than that, or you'll up the risks of ill health, including strokes and cancers of the liver, throat and breast.

Moving too little - "Inactivity is an addiction that many of us have," says William J. Evans, PhD, a professor of geriatric medicine, nutrition and physiology at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock. But even a little bit of activity can extend our life, reduce the chances of being overweight, reduce stress and maybe even ward off Alzheimer's disease. "The first step is to just make the decision to be more active," Dr. Evans says. "That can be as simple as parking a little further away and walking or taking the stairs instead of the elevator." Then work your way up to the exercise level recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: moderate-intensity activity such as walking for 30 minutes or more, five or more days a week.

Eating too much saturated fat - Saturated fats - in meats, poultry, milk and butter - can boost "bad" and total cholesterol and send you down the path of heart disease. Go Mediterranean, and train your palate to prefer monounsaturated fats found in canola, olive and peanut oil and polyunsaturated fats found in safflower, corn and flaxseed oil. "There's growing evidence that a more Mediterranean-style diet is healthy, even if you don't lose weight," Dr. Evans says. One smart goal, according to the American Dietetic Association: Keep saturated fat intake to 10 percent or less of your total calories.

Smoking cigarettes - More than one-fifth of U.S. adults, or 46 million people, still smoke, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. To reduce your risk of cancer and early wrinkling, grab some over-the-counter nicotine gum. In a review of 123 studies published in 2004, nicotine gum and other replacement treatments such as a patch upped the odds of quitting by two times compared to relying on willpower alone.

Breathing polluted air - Outdoor air pollution can cause coughing and burning eyes and is linked to asthma attacks and respiratory disease. Easier said than done, but stay indoors as much as possible when pollution levels are high.

Getting too much sun - Every year, more than a million people in the U.S. find out they have skin cancer - and another 55,000 find out they have the most deadly form, melanoma. Limiting sun exposure and wearing a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 cut the risk of skin cancer as well as wrinkles.

Getting too little sleep - Being sleep deprived used to be a badge of honor. Now, lack of sleep has been linked to obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and memory problems, even in your adults. Clean up your bedroom so it's a sleeper's paradise, says Ronald Klatz, DO, MD, president of the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine in Chicago. "Keep TVs and other distractions out of there," he says. Install shades or blinds so the bedroom is pitch dark.

Being overweight - Excess weight boosts the chances of heart disease, diabetes and even cancer, yet an astounding 64 percent of adult Americans weigh too much. The latest research suggests the type of diet you choose is less important than your vow to stick with it. When researchers compared four popular plans - Weight Watchers, Ornish, Atkins and the Zone - the weight loss after was comparable, they reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. But the dropout rate was high for each. The key to success: *Pick a diet that fits your lifestyle*, and you're more likely to stick with it.

Eating too much sugar - Excess sugar can lead to weight gain and possibly heart disease. Nutrition experts advise keeping "added sugars" in snacks and cookies to 12 teaspoons a day on a 2,200-calorie diet, but the U.S. Department of Agriculture found the consumption was typically 31 teaspoons a day in 2000. To cut back, turn to fruits and sweet vegetables to tame the craving. Read labels to minimize your intake of added sugars.

I think most of us are aware of these 10 points but maybe we aren't taking action. Well, I am but that is just me, after all, I must set an example. I'm not sure I agree with the advice given about quitting smoking or the use of alcohol, but that is what the researcher suggests. Stress is one big killer and poor diets can wreak havoc on your health. It won't be immediately but eventually it will catch up to you. So take heed with your diet and do your most to be in control of your stress and remember massage is a great, effective way to deal with your stress. It affects you on more than just a physical level and more than your muscles. It affects every system of your body. And remember gift certificates for Valentine's Day. It's just around the corner and a great gesture of love and caring for that special person OR persons in your life. Lastly, I will be moving by March 1st down to Tempe. Stay tuned for the address.

Until next time,

Stay healthy, stay well,



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