Small Changes for Better Health

If you have a chronic disease, improving your health can seem like an overwhelming challenge. But it may not be quite as tough as you think. Getting started may really be as simple as brushing up on your ABCs and 123s! Rather than trying to make big changes all at once, try making small, manageable changes, one at a time. In this issue, we have focused on some of these small steps—see for example, Do You Know Your Diabetes ABCs? (page 5) or 5 Small Steps to a Better You! (below). And when you need a little reward for your efforts, check out our recipe for a simple, sweet, and crunchy springtime salad on page 5! A better, healthier you is just ahead…one small step at a time!

5 Small Steps to a Better You!

Sometimes, you know the only way to improve your life is to make some changes. But making major life changes can be overwhelming. If you struggle with depression, the place you want to be can just seem too far away from where you are. You may find yourself standing still because you don’t know how to get started. But remember: you don’t have to get there all at once. Every small step you take in the right direction counts. And often the small steps can help give you the energy and momentum you need to keep going. So don’t just stand there. Below are 5 small steps you can take to get started. Try taking one each day and before you know it, you’ll be on your way!

1. Make your own day! Quit putting yourself down. You are a good, caring, intelligent person and you deserve to have a day that you love yourself. Let the past go and focus on today. Living in the moment can give you a clearer view to the possibilities ahead!

2. Make someone else’s day. Do you know someone who could use a lift? Tell them how much you appreciate their work, offer a compliment, or just tell them how glad you are to see them. Being able to put a smile on someone else’s face will usually put one on yours!

3. Do something you love. Read, go for walk, call up a favorite friend or family member—whatever it is that makes you feel good. Remember that your needs and feelings are important and you deserve to enjoy your life.

4. Be more active. Park farther than you normally do from the entrance to your work or other destination. Spend a few minutes playing with your children, grandchildren, nieces, or nephews. Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator. Being active can increase your energy levels and make you feel stronger.

5. Help someone—you may be surprised at how good it makes you feel. It doesn’t have to be a big thing: run an errand, walk a dog, hold the door for someone, or get something off a shelf he/she can’t reach. Helping someone else can give you a sense of purpose and well-being.
It may seem a long way off, but summer is on its way. And if your child has asthma or diabetes, a great opportunity for summer fun is waiting! Better yet, while they are having lots of outdoor fun, they’ll be learning more about how to take better care of their disease. There are several asthma and diabetes camps available in Minnesota this summer, and PrimeWest Health wants to help your kids go!

If your child is a PrimeWest Health member when camp begins, PrimeWest Health will pay for the registration fee for qualified camps. Brochures with more details about the camps were sent to eligible members. If you think your child is eligible but you did not receive a brochure, call Jennifer at 1-888-588-4420 ext. 5351 (toll free).

What Makes Your Asthma Worse?

Jenny tells Johnny about her friend Sam. Sam has asthma and told the class that dogs, cats, smoke, and dust make his asthma worse. Sometimes in the summer, pollen and grass make his asthma flare up. Things that make Sam’s asthma worse are called triggers.

Jenny read that both kids and grown-ups have asthma triggers and that everyone’s triggers are different.

The best way to stop triggers from making your asthma worse is to stay away from them. Talk to your doctor about how to stay away from your triggers. Ask a grown-up to help.
Johnny knows his triggers. Help him find them in the word puzzle. Use the list below for clues. Words can be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, or backwards.

Pets
Colds
Sprays
Dust
Grass
Pollen
Mold
Smoke
Weather

Source: GlaxoSmithKline (GSK)
COPD Office Visit Checklist

Answer the questions below before your next visit and be sure to talk with your doctor about your answers.

Date: ____________

Since your last office visit:

1. Has your breathing been worse than usual? □ Yes □ No
2. Have you coughed more than usual? □ Yes □ No
3. Have you coughed up more mucus than usual? □ Yes □ No
4. Has your mucus been thicker than usual? □ Yes □ No
5. Has your mucus been a different color than usual? □ Yes □ No
6. Have you been wheezing? □ Yes □ No
7. Have you been awakened by your breathing? □ Yes □ No
8. About how many hours have you been sleeping each night? ____________
9. How would you describe your appetite? □ Decreased □ Normal □ Increased
10. Have you lost weight? □ Yes □ No If yes, how much? ____________
11. What activities have you been doing? ________________________________
12. Is there any activity that is harder to do because of your breathing? □ Yes □ No
13. How many times in the past 12 months have you taken an antibiotic or steroid for your breathing? ______
14. How often do you use your fast-acting inhaler or nebulizer? ____________ times in a day.
15. Did you use your long-term controller medicine today? □ Yes □ No
16. What other medicines do you take for your breathing? ________________________________

Bring all your medicines to your doctor’s appointment. Talk to your doctor about how you are feeling and how you can better manage your COPD.
Do You Know Your Diabetes ABCs?
There are 3 key tests for diabetes that affect your long-term health. These are known as your diabetes ABCs.

You can lower your chance of having heart problems if you control your diabetes ABCs:

A is for “A1C test”
Your blood sugar average for the last 2-3 months. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) says the goal is below 7%.

B is for “Blood pressure”
The ADA says aim to be below 130/80 mmHg.

C is for “Cholesterol”
The ADA says LDL cholesterol should be below 100 mg/dL and triglycerides should be below 150 mg/dL.

Ways you can control your diabetes ABCs:
• Make smart food choices
  - Eat lean, not fatty, meats
  - Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy products
  - Eat at least 5 fruit or vegetable servings a day
  - Use less salt and sodium
• Stop smoking
  - Talk to your doctor about how to quit smoking
• Be more active
  - Ask your doctor about the right activity program for you
  - Start slowly (5 minutes a day) and add a little at a time
  - Work up to 30 minutes most days of the week

• Take your medicines
  - Your doctor may have you take medicines for each of your diabetes ABCs
  - You may have to take more than 1 medicine
  - You and your doctor can decide what medicine is best for you
  - Do not start or stop taking medicine without talking to your doctor first

Talk with your doctor about your goals for your diabetes ABCs.

Source: GlaxoSmithKline (GSK)

Apple Carrot Salad

Recipe Summary:
Preparation Time: 10 minutes
Number of Servings: 6
Cups of Fruits and Vegetables per Person: ½

Ingredients:
1 cup shredded carrot
3 (medium) unpeeled, diced apples
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
½ cup raisins
½ cup low-fat mayonnaise

Directions:
Combine all ingredients. Chill thoroughly. Serve on salad greens.

Nutrition Facts: Serving size: ⅛ recipe
Calories 110, Total Fat 1g, Saturated Fat 0g, Trans Fat 0g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 140mg, Total Carbohydrate 25g, Dietary Fiber 3g, Sugars 20g, Protein 1g

Percent Daily Value: Vitamin A 45%, Vitamin C 10%, Calcium 2%, Iron 2% (based on a 2,000 calorie diet)

Diabetic Exchange**
Fruit: 1, Vegetables: 0, Meat: 0, Milk: 0, Fat: 0, Carbs: 0, Other: 0

**Diabetic exchanges are calculated based on the American Diabetes Association Exchange System. Partial exchanges are not included.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Exercise—Get Motivated!

How many times have you told yourself that you’re going to start exercising tomorrow...and then tomorrow comes and you never keep that promise? Many people complain about lack of motivation when it comes to exercising. You set a deadline for yourself and then it comes and there are a hundred other things that you’d rather do instead. Funny how laundry looks more appealing when it is up against exercising! To get past this roadblock, the first thing you have to do is figure out where the lack of motivation is coming from. How do you picture exercise? Riding a stationary bike all alone? Walking or jogging on a treadmill hoping you won’t trip or fall? Having to get up early or stay up late just to fit it in? If this sounds familiar, it’s no surprise you can’t get motivated to exercise! Here are a few tips that might help change that:

• Do what you can. Too often people start out trying to do too much and then get frustrated and quit. If 30 minutes of exercise seems overwhelming, start out walking for 1 minute and then increase as your body allows. Remember: 1 minute is better than 0 minutes!

• Make exercise fun! If walking on a treadmill or riding an exercise bike all by yourself just sounds dull and unpleasant, go for a walk with a friend. Before you know it, half an hour will have passed because you were enjoying the company.

• Schedule exercise into your weekly routine. If you are busy, the days can fly by so fast that they are over before you have a chance to exercise. If you build the time into your schedule—sign up for a class, make a date with a friend—you’ll be more likely to follow through.

Benefits of exercise for people with chronic disease

If you have a chronic disease, you may avoid exercising because you are too tired, too breathless, or too overweight. But all of these things can actually be helped by exercise. Start slowly and gradually build up the amount and intensity of exercise. This will keep you from being overwhelmed or exhausted, while still letting you experience the benefits. Give it a try!

Heart Health (OVC)

If you have heart disease, moderate exercise can offer the following benefits, all of which reduce stress on your heart:

1. Improve your heart and lung function
2. Improve your strength and endurance
3. Increase energy levels and metabolism and help you control your weight
4. Relieve stress and tension

Asthma or COPD

If you have a lung disease like asthma or COPD, doing both physical exercise and special breathing exercises* can help with the following over time:

1. Improve the strength of the muscles you use to breathe, including your diaphragm
2. Improve how well your body uses oxygen
3. Decrease shortness of breath
4. Help clear mucus from your lungs

*Talk to your health care provider about special breathing exercises for people with lung disease.

Depression

If you are depressed, you often feel tired, fatigued, and unmotivated, so finding the energy to exercise can be tough. However, those very symptoms are actually improved by exercise, so finding the strength to do even a little bit is worth it. Here’s how it can help:

1. Increase the levels of chemicals in your body that make you feel happy (endorphins)
2. Reduce levels of stress hormones
3. Increase energy levels and improve sleep patterns (the ability to sleep through the night and wake up feeling refreshed)
4. Boost self-esteem

Diabetes

If you have diabetes, you may also have an increased risk for high blood pressure, poor circulation, and obesity. Exercise can help you minimize these risks as well as improve key symptoms of your disease:

1. Decrease blood sugar and improve your ability to control it
2. Increase your body’s insulin sensitivity, which may allow you to use less
3. Help you lose weight and keep it off
4. Improve blood circulation and lower blood pressure

Sources: American Diabetes Association (ADA); American Heart Association (AHA); American Lung Association (ALA); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); MayoClinic.com; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI); and WebMD
Make activity a heart-healthy habit

If you have or are at risk for heart disease, you may need to be more active. Physical activity may help you keep from getting heart disease, delay its onset, or even improve your condition. But before starting an exercise program, talk to your doctor about what level of activity is right for you. For many people, your goal should be 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise on most or all days. Getting into this heart-healthy habit may be easier than you think! You can:

- Walk a mile in 15 minutes
- Take exercise classes
- Ride a bicycle
- Do housework or yard work
- Play tennis

Think of ways to be more active

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you often…</th>
<th>Try this instead…</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read a magazine during your lunch break</td>
<td>□ Take a walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for the closest parking space</td>
<td>□ Choose a parking space far away from the entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take the elevator</td>
<td>□ Take the stairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sit at the kitchen table and talk with a friend</td>
<td>□ Take a walk with your friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch TV from your chair or couch</td>
<td>□ Ride a stationary bike or walk in place</td>
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You may want to track your progress to see how well you are doing. This may help you stay with your program.

This information is not meant to replace your doctor’s advice. Be sure to talk with your doctor about what activities are safe for you. Ask about healthy eating and other heart-healthy changes you can make.
Member Services 1-866-431-0801

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Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llame al número que aparece más arriba.

Ogow. Haddii aad dooneysa in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjama dda macluumaadkani oo lacag la’aan ah, wac lamburga kore.

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