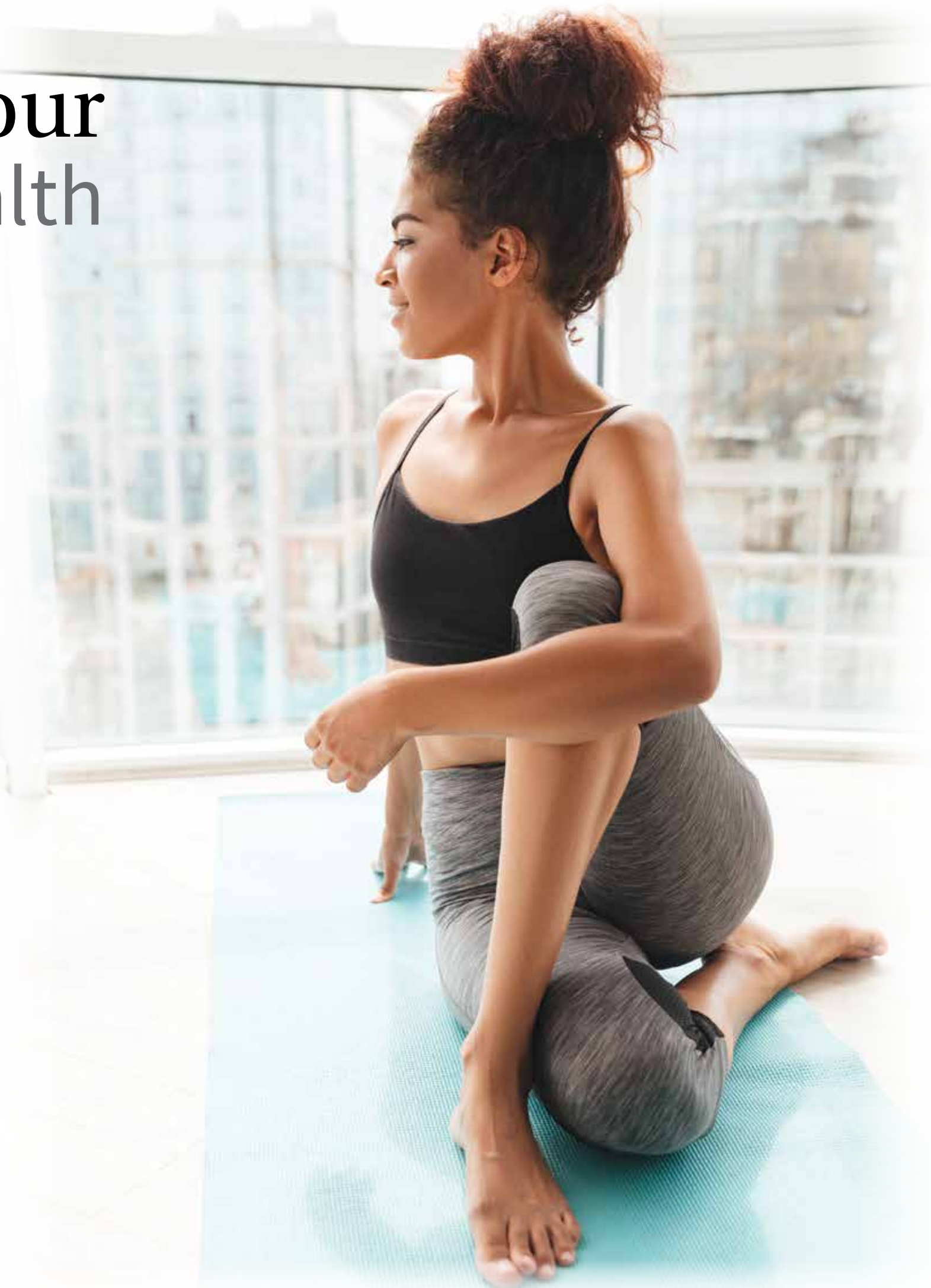


Your Health



Taking Care of the Basics

EATING RIGHT

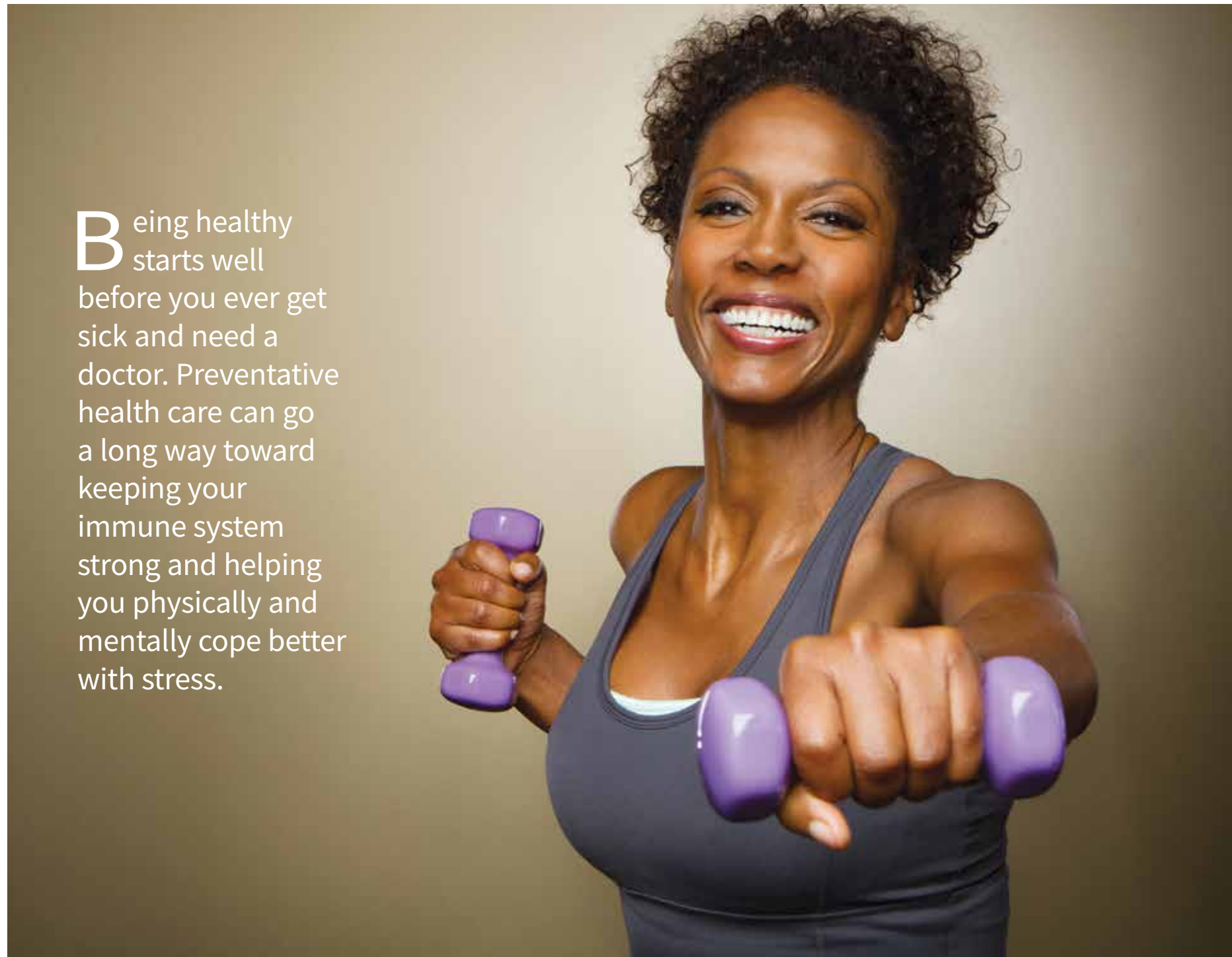
Everyone knows to eat a balanced diet, but it's still one of the most important factors in good health. Eating lots of fruits, vegetables and whole grains, while avoiding too many rich and heavy foods, can help you have more energy and feel better. A healthy diet can also help stave off conditions like diabetes, heart disease and obesity or help you in controlling those conditions.

EXERCISING

Regular exercise can also help you feel better overall, in addition to managing long-term health conditions such as diabetes. Your joints last longer and hurt less if you're exercising regularly, plus getting outside and working up a sweat is good for your mental health. Find physical activity that you enjoy and can do regularly. This can be high-intensity exercises like running, hiking, kickboxing or weightlifting, or low-intensity exercises like walking, yoga and pilates.

SLEEPING ENOUGH

The CDC suggests seven to nine hours of sleep a night for adults. Simply being in bed for that long isn't sufficient, though; you need good quality sleep at night. If you're waking up after eight hours of sleep and still feeling tired, waking up multiple times a night or if you snore or gasp for air while you sleep, you're probably not getting enough deep sleep. Try



Being healthy starts well before you ever get sick and need a doctor. Preventative health care can go a long way toward keeping your immune system strong and helping you physically and mentally cope better with stress.

to go to bed and get up at the same time every day and cultivate other good sleep habits, including reducing screen time right before bed; having a quiet, dark room; keeping screens out of the bedroom;

and not eating large meals of drinking caffeine right before you go to bed.

GETTING REGULAR HEALTH CARE

See your doctor for an

annual physical to get your blood pressure and cholesterol checked and get any tests you may need (such as for mammograms and pap smears for women and prostate exams for men). Make

sure you're up to date on vaccines, and take this chance to talk over any concerns or ask questions. You should see a dentist twice a year and see an eye doctor regularly as well.

Stress Management

How you handle stress is a huge factor in the rest of your health as well as your overall quality of life; poor stress management can make you feel under the weather, exacerbate conditions you already have, interrupt your sleep, and cause you to have a shorter fuse in dealing with people or issues and feeling overwhelmed when dealing with problems.

If it goes on long enough, your brain is exposed to cortisol, which can weaken your immune system as well. The National Association of Mental Illness talked about stress, what to watch out for and how you can handle this normal part of life in a healthy way.

SIGNS OF STRESS

Like other conditions, stress can cause physical symptoms, including headaches, difficulty sleeping, jaw pain, appetite changes, frequent mood swings, having difficulty concentrating and feeling overwhelmed and unable to deal with difficulties that come your way.

TRIGGERS FOR STRESS

Stress is a part of everyday life, so it's important to know where it is likely to come from in your life. Your job, family relationships, financial worries, school, health concerns, not getting enough sleep and not eating well can all lead to stress, which, while it not be overwhelming at first, can become that way if not handled well. On top of this stress, other life events can make you even more vulnerable, such as experiencing a major life change (moving, the death of a loved one, starting a new job, having a child, getting married), feeling



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alone or without a social network for support.

REDUCING STRESS

Everyone handles stress a little differently, so don't feel

bad if your friend's way of coping doesn't work for you. NAMI suggested starting with accepting your needs — know what your triggers are, avoid them if possible or allow time

and energy to handle them. Schedule your days so you have time to take breaks as needed, you're getting enough sleep, you have time for hobbies or reading or other self-

care; exercise; and eat well. Lean on your support network and consider talking to a therapist or support group. Be careful not to self-medicate with alcohol and drugs.

Healthy by the Numbers

Every time you go to the doctor, she's going to take a couple of numbers that can tell you a lot about your health. High cholesterol and high blood pressure can both lead to or be symptomatic of serious chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes and stroke.

The CDC talks about both of these conditions, what to know and how you can make lifestyle changes to keep these numbers in a healthy range.

CHOLESTEROL

Blood cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that your body produces naturally and uses to make hormones and digest fatty foods. Animal products like eggs, meat and cheese contain dietary cholesterol.

High cholesterol, which about one in six Americans has, could be caused by a number of factors, including family history, health conditions like obesity and lifestyle habits such as a diet high in saturated and trans fats, not getting enough exercise, smoking or drinking too much alcohol.

While there is medication to treat high cholesterol, you can make several lifestyle changes to manage your cholesterol more naturally. Eat foods that are low in saturated fats, like fruits, vegetables and whole grains; high in fiber, like beans; lean meats like fish and chicken; and foods with unsaturated fats like nuts and olive oil. Regular exercise, quitting smoking and keeping your weight under control also can help you manage your cholesterol.

Lipids		Notes
LDL-C Direct (mg/dL) ^v	277	High Risk
HDL-C (mg/dL) ^v	182	
Triglycerides (mg/dL) ^v		
Non-HDL-C (mg/dL) ^v		
Apo B (mg/dL) ^v		
LDL-P (nmol/L) ^{sv}	207	
Small LDL-P (nmol/L) ^{sv}	149	
LDL-C (mg/dL) ^{sv}	2746	
(mg/dL) ^v		
ol/L) ^{iv}	37	
(L) ^{iv}		
	857	

BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, has two measurements: systolic blood pressure, the top number, measures the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart beats, and the bottom number, the diastolic pressure,

measures the pressure in the vessels when the heart is resting between beats. A normal blood pressure is 120/80; anything over 140/90 is high.

Hypertension can make your arteries hard, which means less oxygen is moving through your body, which can

lead to heart attack, heart failure or a stroke. Left untreated, it can lead to chronic kidney disease.

Although about a third of Americans have high blood pressure, it doesn't have any symptoms, so without getting checked by a doctor, you may

not know if you have it. There isn't any one identifiable cause, in most cases, although genetics, age, obesity and a poor diet. To manage it naturally, it's a similar diet if you're watching your cholesterol, with the added measure of watching out for your sodium intake.



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Healthy Weight

Weight is no one's favorite topic, but it is an important factor in your health. Being overweight or obese puts people at greater risk of being diagnosed with chronic conditions like diabetes, arthritis and heart disease, it puts greater stress on your joints and can make exercise harder and have an overall greater sense of dissatisfaction with your health.

That means maintaining or reaching a healthy weight or reaching a healthy weight. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, what that number looks like is different for everyone; talk to your doctor to find out what range you should be in, and, as you're making lifestyle changes, think more about how much energy you have, how your clothes are fitting and how you're feeling

than just the number on the scale.

Healthy weight management will not happen through fad diets or even short-term changes. For most people, it doesn't mean cutting out certain foods either. If you love cookies, any long-term diet that doesn't include cookies isn't likely to be successful for you. Instead, find a lifestyle that includes a mix of healthy eating and regular exercise.

The first step is to determine the number of calories you need in a day. The standard 2,000 recommended daily allowance is more than many American adults need.

Once you know your calorie count, start planning meals that fit into your intake, provide the nutrients you need and taste good. A healthy diet is full of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products; lean meat like poul-

try and fish, as well as other lean proteins like beans, eggs and nuts; and is low in saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, salt and added sugars.

This necessitates avoiding processed foods, which means more cooking and meal preparation on your part, but there are shortcuts or different methods that will still taste good and be healthy — use frozen, already sliced or canned fruits and vegetables (just make sure

canned fruit is packed in juice, not syrup); substitute brown rice for white rice; and find healthier substitutions for ingredients in your favorite dishes or different ways of cooking, such as sautéing instead of deep frying food.

For high-calorie foods like desserts, chips, French fries, cheese and anything with butter, keep them as part of your diet, but cut back how much you eat and how frequently.

Are You Fully Vaccinated?

Many people are familiar with the vaccination schedule for children, but did you know that adults need vaccines as well? According to the CDC, immunity from childhood vaccines can wear off, requiring boosters. Additionally, adults are at risk of different diseases than children are so require different vaccinations.

These shots are among the most convenient, effective and safest preventative care options available, particularly for people who are traveling to exotic places or working with at-risk groups.

Vaccinations are generally covered by health insurance.

WHAT VACCINATIONS DO I NEED?

Adults and children should get a flu vaccine every year. Protection doesn't last from year to year because the flu virus mutates; scientists determine the strains of the virus that are most likely to infect people each year and prepare a vaccine for those strains. Although getting a vaccine doesn't guarantee you won't get sick, those who get the flu will likely be less sick if they got the flu shot.

The Tdap vaccine protects against whooping cough, tetanus and diphtheria and is safe for use in adults and children older than 7 years. Other routine vaccinations include the measles-mumps-rubella, chicken pox and polio vaccines. Most people get those as children.

WHAT ABOUT WHEN I TRAVEL?

Depending on where you're traveling, certain vaccinations are recommended or may even be required. The CDC recommends hepatitis A and typhoid vaccines when traveling to Mexico, for instance, as contaminated food or water could be a risk. Parts of Africa have an increased risk of cholera, and jungle areas are full of mosquitoes, so getting vaccinated for malaria is a good idea.



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Talk to your doctor about activities that could put you at risk for other diseases. Travelers who may come into contact with wild animals should consider a rabies vaccination. Depending on where you're going and what you're doing, meningitis, yellow fever and hepatitis B may be an issue. Check the CDC's websites

for recommended and required vaccines.

WHAT IF I'M PREGNANT OR BREASTFEEDING?

Getting a vaccine while pregnant also offers your baby that protection, so the CDC recommends pregnant women get vaccinated for whooping

cough and, if appropriate, the flu. Newborns do not get vaccinated for whooping cough right away, and this disease can be deadly for them. Other vaccines, like the MMR, should happen before pregnancy.

It also is safe to get vaccines while breastfeeding. Talk to your doctor about questions.

Preventing Heart Disease

Heat disease is the No. 1 cause of death for Americans, for both men and women and most ethnicities; for American Indians and Asians/Pacific Islanders, heart disease is second to cancer in causes of death. More than 600,000 people die of heart disease every year; that represents 25 percent of all deaths in this country.

The good news is that while some aspects of heart disease are hereditary and all risk factors can't be fully controlled, there are a number of lifestyle changes that can reduce the risk of a serious heart condition, like a heart attack, or help protect yourself from acquiring a heart condition. And, while heart disease looks different in everybody, there are symptoms to watch for. Since early action is critical in treating heart disease, that knowledge can save a life.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Most people recognize that chest pain is symptomatic of a heart attack, but there are other signs to look for as well. Pain or discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw or upper stomach; shortness of breath and nausea, lightheadedness or cold sweats all could indicate a heart attack. Women with heart disease are more likely to report chest pain that is sharp or burning.

When in doubt, it's better to seek treatment immediately. Almost half of sudden cardiac deaths occur before a person can get to a hospital, which likely means early warning signs were ignored.

RISK FACTORS

High cholesterol, hypertension and smoking are the



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major risk factors for heart disease; the CDC said about half of people with heart disease have at least one of these risk factors. Other chronic conditions or lifestyle choices that are risk factors are diabetes,

being overweight or obese, having a poor diet, not getting sufficient exercise and excessive alcohol use.

PREVENTION

Healthy habits like a bal-

anced diet (whole foods with lots of color on your plate that comes from fruits and vegetables, not colored candy), getting plenty of exercise, quitting smoking and reducing your alcohol intake all reduce your

risk of heart disease or a heart attack. You also want to keep your cholesterol, blood pressure and diabetes under control; take any medication you should be and see your doctor regularly.

Avoiding the Flu

Influenza isn't just a cold on steroids. This disease, which resurfaces every fall and can be a health risk well into the next spring, can knock even the healthiest people out of commission for a week to 10 days.

While flu can be dangerous to infants, elderly adults, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems or chronic illness, for most people it's not deadly, just extremely unpleasant. It's good to be aware of the symptoms and know how to treat them.

According to the Mayo Clinic, early symptoms of the flu appear like a common cold, though they are likely to come on quickly and then get much worse than a cold. Common symptoms of the flu include a fever higher than 100 degrees; aching muscles; chills and sweats; headache; a dry, persistent cough; fatigue; weakness; nasal congestion; and a sore throat.

Most people with the flu don't need to see a doctor; stay home for at least a full day after your fever subsides (your coworkers and fellow students will thank you), rest, drink lots of fluids and treat the symptoms as necessary to remain comfortable. If you or a family member are at risk of complications, see a doctor immediately. Taking antiviral drugs within the first two days may shorten the length of your illness and help prevent other problems.

Those who are at risk and should seek medical care include the elderly and very young; people who live or



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work in facilities like hospitals or nursing homes; people with weakened immune systems, like those who have cancer or are going through chemotherapy; people with chronic illnesses like asthma, diabetes or heart disease;

pregnant women; and people with obesity.

Getting a vaccine is your first and best option for prevention; it makes you less likely to get sick and likely will reduce the severity of the illness if you do get sick. Other

ways to prevent the spread of disease is regularly washing your hands, using alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available; cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze; and avoid crowds. Flu

spreads more easily when people are close to each other, such as in child care centers, schools, auditoriums, public transportation, and perhaps most importantly, doctor's offices and emergency rooms during flu season.