



THE Y AXIS



What Are You Looking At?

It's hard to escape these days.

Unless you're asleep, there's a good chance a big part of your day includes staring into a digital screen.



How often do you use a computer, tablet, smartphone, or sit in front of the TV? More than you probably care to admit.

Nearly 90 percent of adults use digital devices for two or more hours a day.¹ And that's long enough to cause digital eye strain. Symptoms include:

- Neck, shoulder and back pain
- Eye strain
- Headaches
- Blurred vision
- Dry eyes

Got digital eye strain? Cut back on screen time. Put down your smartphone. And go for a walk.

COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:
evan.jensen@wellsources.com

A Little Exercise Goes a Long Way

Raise your heart rate to boost health

When Oregon resident Heather Tourville heads to Spokane, Washington on May 7 with her husband and two kids, there's a reason for the trip. But it's not the usual sit-back-and-relax get-away. Call it an active vacation.

They won't be visiting the childhood home of crooner Bing Crosby. And they won't be going just to see what's left of the 1974 World's Fair. But they will be joining 45,000 people for one of the biggest races in the world: The Lilac Bloomsday Run.

"We've been training together as a family," says Tourville, who has completed the 7.46-mile race before. "It's been a lot of fun to walk and run with my husband and kids to get ready for the race."

More than a million runners, walkers, joggers, kids, and people in wheelchairs have finished the race during its 40-year history. Even a 105-year-old woman has walked her way to the finish line.

MORE

How much exercise do you need?
tinyurl.com/kf49fgw

Be Active 30 to 60 Minutes a Day

You don't have to sign up for a race. But you do need to be active.

When you walk, bike, dance, or work in your garden, your heart beats faster. Research shows that physical activity quickens your pulse and strengthens your heart, lungs, and muscles.² Being active also helps control weight, improve sleep patterns, reduce risk for chronic diseases, and improve mood – all of which help you live longer.

Can you go the distance?

With a little effort, you'll be strong enough to complete an organized walk or a run in your area. You don't need to be a diehard runner. But you do need at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day. If you're not doing that already, set a goal to get there. Even a little exercise goes a long way to improve your health. [@](#)

Solving the Mystery of Migraine Headaches

Healthy weight linked to fewer migraines

Nobody wants a migraine headache. It's hard to work, care for family members, or live your life when you have one. The symptoms can include:

- Throbbing, pulsating pain
- Sensitivity to light and sound
- Nausea
- Blurred vision
- Vomiting



If you don't get migraines, you probably know someone who does. About 12 percent of adults suffer from different types of migraine headaches. They're often caused by triggers like certain foods, stress, or lack of sleep. Sometimes, the reason is a mystery.

Now there's another possible trigger. A new study suggests that your weight may be linked to migraines.³ Researchers looked at data for about 300,000 migraine sufferers. They found that obese people were 27 percent more likely to have migraines. But people who maintained a healthy weight were less likely to get migraines.

Are you obese or overweight? Find out by calculating your Body Mass Index. It's a measure of body fat based on your height and weight.

If your BMI is 30 or above, you're obese. And that puts you at risk for migraine headaches.



Zucchini Lasagna

Chop up some onions for this meatless dish.⁵

Ingredients

- ½ lb lasagna noodles, cooked
- ¾ C mozzarella cheese, grated
- 1-½ C cottage cheese, fat-free
- ¼ C Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1-½ C zucchini, raw, sliced
- 2-½ C tomato sauce
- 2 tsp basil, dried
- 2 tsp oregano, dried
- ¼ C onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic
- ½ tsp black pepper

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Coat baking dish with vegetable oil or spray.
2. In bowl, combine ½ C mozzarella and 1 T Parmesan cheese. Set aside.
3. In medium bowl, combine remaining mozzarella and Parmesan cheese. Add cottage cheese. Mix well. Set aside.
4. Combine tomato sauce with remaining ingredients. Spread thin layer of sauce mixture in bottom of baking dish. Add a layer of noodles, cottage cheese mixture, and zucchini. Repeat layering and cover top with noodles.
5. Top with a layer of sauce. Add reserved cheese mixture. Cover with aluminum foil.
6. Bake for 30–40 minutes.

Don't Cry. Everything Tastes Better with Onions

(Well, almost everything.) Onions are good for your health, too.



Cut open the perfect onion, and the sulfuric compounds will bring tears to your eyes. But a few tears in the kitchen are worth the trouble to tap the vegetable's savory taste.

"It's hard to imagine civilization without onions," the late celebrity chef Julia Child once said.

Onions are the most commonly grown (and eaten) vegetable in the world. They're used in a wide range of recipes and nearly every ethnic cuisine. You'll find onions in salsa, soups, and sauces. And they're commonly found on sandwiches and salads.

Onions add a lot of flavor to the foods we enjoy. And they're healthy too. Onions are low in calories. They contain no sodium, fat, or cholesterol. They're a good source of vitamin C, fiber, and other nutrients. And studies show that flavonoids and antioxidants in onions may help reduce your risk for heart disease, bowel problems, and certain types of cancer.⁴

Whether you order out or cook at home, use a lot of onions to flavor and season your favorite dishes. Skip the deep-fried onion rings and other onion creations cooked in fat. Fresh onions – chopped, minced, thinly sliced, or cooked – are healthy for you and taste great.

Julia Child was right. It would be hard for most of us to imagine life without onions. After all, the average American eats about 20 pounds of onions a year. But that doesn't come close to the country that loves onions the most. The average Libyan eats nearly 67 pounds!

Whether you eat 20 pounds or 67, here's a tip for chopping all those onions. Dangle a piece of bread from your mouth. Many cooks swear it keeps your eyes from tearing. @

MORE

Try these onion recipes
<http://tinyurl.com/n3yymhc>

Solving the Mystery of Migraine Headaches (continued from page 1)

You may not be able to control every factor linked to migraines. But you can control your weight.

MORE

Calculate your Body Mass Index
tinyurl.com/qyqhmdx

Your diet, lifestyle, and exercise habits can make a difference. If you need help, ask your doctor for ways you can achieve a healthy weight. @

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Take the May Health Challenge!

Give Your Gut Some Love: Practice healthy habits to improve digestion

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Joe Raphael answers the question:
Why do so many diets recommend eating more leafy greens?

Q. Why do so many diets recommend eating more leafy greens?

A. Take a look at smart-eating plans or diets. Leafy greens like spinach, broccoli, kale, and cabbage are usually on the list of foods you should eat. Mediterranean Diet, check. Paleo Diet, check. Dash Diet, check. Recipes for leafy-green salads, smoothies, and side dishes are everywhere.

Why? Because leafy greens are good for you. They're packed with vitamins and nutrients. They're low in calories. They're affordable (unlike some diets that require buying expensive products). You can add leafy greens to your diet with little to no prep time. And studies show leafy greens provide important health benefits such as:¹

- Reduce the risk for a heart attack or stroke
- Lower the risk for type 2 diabetes
- Control blood pressure
- Improve bone health
- Lower cholesterol
- Protect vision
- Increase energy
- Reduce inflammation
- Prevent certain types of cancer
- Improve bowel health
- Control hunger and aid in weight management
- Support healthy skin and hair
- Prevent age-related memory loss

Are you eating enough leafy greens?

Probably not. Most adults don't eat enough leafy greens and other vegetables. In fact,



only 9 percent do.² If you want to change your eating habits, improve your health, and feel better, eating more leafy greens can help.

Eat one pound of leafy greens a day

If you're already eating a lot of leafy greens, keep it up. If you're not, you're probably scoffing at the idea of eating a pound of greens a day. But you can do this. Give it a week, and you'll feel different. You'll feel better. And you'll be more likely to start making other smart diet and lifestyle choices.

Here's how to get started:

1. Don't worry about making any changes to your current eating habits. It's business as usual for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks.
2. Set a SMART goal to eat one pound of leafy greens a day. tinyurl.com/hw57so6
3. Buy a bag of leafy greens. A one-pound bag usually costs less than \$2.

4. Eat a handful of leafy greens when you wake up. (Only takes about 20 seconds to chew and swallow).
5. Have another handful after you shower.
6. When you're ready for work, school, or the rest of the day, eat another handful of leafy greens.
7. Eat a handful at snack time or whenever you feel an urge to eat. You'll chew up two or three more handfuls of leafy greens during the day.

Eating a pound of leafy greens a day is easy when you break it up this way. It will only take a few minutes out of your day. This is a very simple plan that anyone can follow.

In as little as a week, you'll feel different after eating a pound of leafy greens a day. We can measure the health benefits of eating more leafy greens with lab tests and biometric data. If you really want to put this challenge to the test, measure lab work after six to eight weeks of a consistent plant-strong lifestyle change. Always consult with your doctor.

When you feel good because you're eating right and making smart lifestyle choices, you're more likely to keep doing it.

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Give Your Gut Some Love

CHALLENGE

Practice healthy habits to improve digestion

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

- 1 Read "Give Your Gut Some Love."
- 2 Practice healthy habits to improve digestion on at least 22 days this month.
- 3 Keep a record of your completed challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



Joey Chestnut likes to eat...a lot. When he went off to college at San Jose State University, he just about majored in eating.

He scarfed down 6.3 pounds of asparagus in 11.5 minutes. He munched his way through 32.5 grilled cheese sandwiches in 10 minutes. And he was still hungry.

He ate waffles, mini-burgers, sausages, pizza, and chicken wings. He drank a gallon of milk in 41 seconds. He even ate a 72-ounce steak, salad, baked potato, shrimp cocktail, and bread roll in less than 9 minutes. And he ate a lot of hot dogs (70 dogs with buns in 10 minutes).

He told reporters that he likes being a competitive eater. It "challenges both my body and my mind." He didn't mention any digestive problems that might follow.

Maybe you don't eat like Joey Chestnut. But chowing down on the wrong foods can lead to stomach aches, heart burn, health problems, and a lot of time in the bathroom. And it doesn't have to be that way. Healthy eating and lifestyle habits can improve digestion and your health. Take the month-long Health Challenge and Give Your Gut Some Love.

Time for a Gut Check: How much do you know about your eating habits and digestion?¹

- | | T | F |
|--|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | It takes about 12 to 24 hours to digest an average meal. |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | Your mouth makes about 2 cups of saliva a day to help digest food. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | Fiber is a natural laxative and aids in digestion. |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | Drinking water does not help your body digest and breakdown food. |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | The average adult eats about 2,000 pounds of food a year. |

How did you do? (Answers below). Your mouth makes about 6 cups of saliva a day to help digest food. And drinking water **does** help breakdown food and aid in digestion. Your food choices and eating habits can have a big impact on digestion and your health. In some cases, you may need to avoid certain foods or see a doctor for help with digestive problems.

Answers: 1. True. 2. False. 3. True. 4. False. 5. True.

A Healthy Gut

Eat food. Digest it. Absorb the nutrients. Makes sense, right? But are you eating foods high in nutrients? Or does your typical meal plan include pizza, burgers, fries, soda, and desserts? What you eat can have a big impact on digestion and your overall health.

There are at least 1,000 kinds of microbes in your gut. As a group, they are called *microbiota*, or forms of bacteria. (You may know it by the term "gut flora.") It helps prevent infections, reduce inflammation, support the immune system, and give your body the nutrients it needs.³

7 foods to supercharge your gut bacteria
<http://tinyurl.com/obx3j7y>



E. coli is part of your gut flora.

Healthy Gut Habits

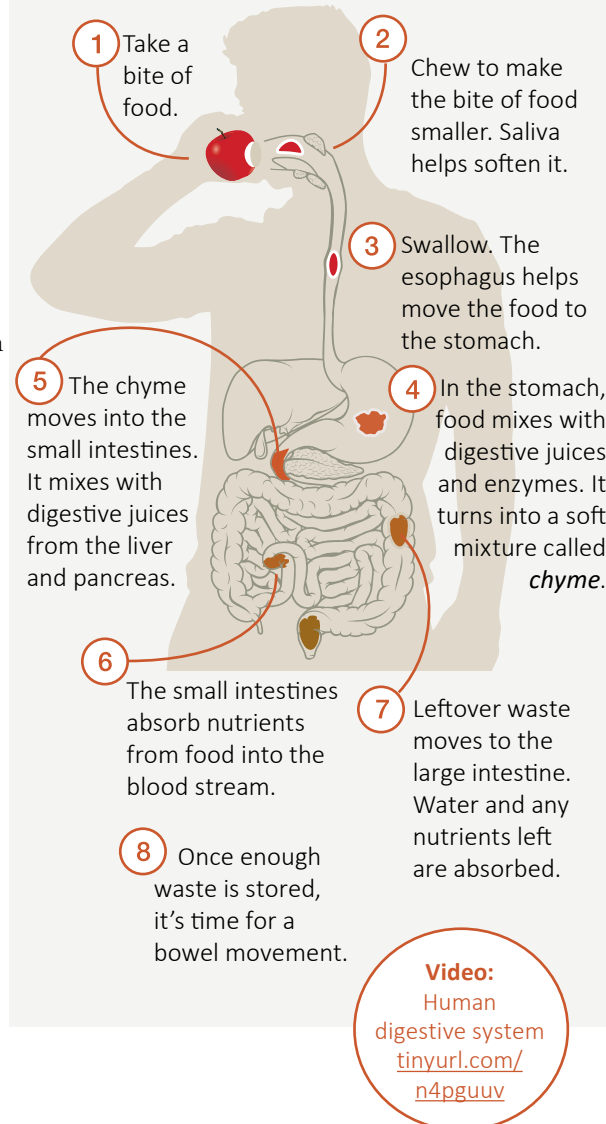
Your food choices impact your gut health. So can other factors like stress, smoking, lack of exercise, being overweight, and gut-related diseases.

If you want to keep your gut happy and be healthy, here are some things you can do:

- **Don't smoke.** Research shows that smoking prevents some forms of good bacteria your gut needs to promote health.⁴ If you smoke, quit. Try a mobile app, tobacco cessation product, or ask your doctor for help to quit smoking.
- **Reduce stress.** When you're stressed out, your gut isn't happy. In fact, studies show that stress can interfere with digestion. It can even lead to serious gut-health diseases, heart burn, and other problems.⁵ Need to reduce stress? Practice deep breathing. Try yoga or meditation. Go for a walk. Talk to a friend or counselor. Do something you enjoy.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** It's almost a chicken or the egg scenario. Being overweight can lead to gut-health problems. And gut-health problems can contribute to obesity.⁶ If you need to lose weight, improve your diet and be more active. If you're already at a healthy weight, keep it that way.
- **Be more active.** Health experts recommend getting 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week. It's a great way to burn extra calories. And it helps strengthen your heart, lungs and muscles. Being active also helps improve the microbiota in your gut.⁷

What is Digestion?

It's how your body gets nutrients from the food you eat. Here's how it works:²



• Avoid or limit red meat.

Research shows that eating red meat is linked to diabetes, heart disease, certain types of cancer, and age-related memory loss. It can also damage the large intestine and cause cramps, diarrhea, and constipation.⁸

- **Drink more water.** Pass too much gas when you were a kid, and your mom probably told you to drink more water. She was right. Drinking water helps break down food. Water helps your body absorb nutrients. It also helps soften stool to make a bowel movement easier. Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses a day.

- **Eat a variety of healthy foods.** Be sure to have fruits, vegetables, and whole grains each day. They're high in fiber,

vitamins, and nutrients that support gut health and digestion.⁹ Try oatmeal, berries, quinoa, onions, Greek yogurt, legumes, bananas, and leafy greens.

Wonder how you can improve digestion and your health? Give your gut some love. Eat healthy food, drink more water, and make smart lifestyle choices. You'll feel better and be healthier.

Quiz:
What do you know about the digestive system?
tinyurl.com/lkef3yl

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Give Your Gut Some Love

CHALLENGE

Practice healthy habits to improve digestion

Instructions

- 1 Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
- 2 Record the number of days you practiced healthy habits to improve digestion.
- 3 Use the calendar to record the actions and choices you make to help you form healthy-gut habits.
- 4 At the end of the month, total the number of days you practiced healthy habits to improve digestion. You must do this on at least 22 days this month to complete this challenge. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH: _____							HC = Health Challenge™ ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	
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HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	

_____ Number of days this month I practiced healthy habits to improve digestion

_____ Number of days this month I exercised at least 30 minutes



Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____

