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Alcohol AND meds DON'T MIX

You may have heard that you shouldn't drink alcohol and take medicines together. This combination is very dangerous because:

1. If you take aspirin and drink alcohol, this raises the chances of bleeding in your stomach.
2. Drinking alcohol with cold or allergy medicines can make you very sleepy.
3. Even small amounts of alcohol taken with sleeping pills can cause dizziness or fainting.
4. Alcohol combined with some pain relievers can cause liver damage.
5. Taking alcohol with certain blood thinners can cause bleeding.

If you take any medicines and drink alcohol, even occasionally, talk to your doctor.

Sources: National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Institute on Aging

What to do when your heel hurts

Heel pain is the most common foot and ankle problem. Often, a sore heel is not serious. But if you ignore it and keep using the foot, it could get worse.



When it comes to heel pain, the first clue is where the heel hurts. Pain at the bottom of the heel is different from pain behind the heel.

PAIN UNDERNEATH THE HEEL



PLANTAR FASCIITIS.

This happens when activity inflames the tissue band that runs along the bottom of the foot. Sometimes, people get plantar fasciitis from wearing shoes that don't properly support their foot. It's often worse when you first get up in the morning. It can usually be resolved with rest, wearing special inserts in the shoes and/or physical therapy.



HEEL SPUR. A heel spur is a buildup of calcium that causes a bony bump on the heel bone. It usually happens if a person has plantar fasciitis for a long time. Treatment is usually similar to plantar fasciitis treatment.



STONE BRUISE. Stepping on a hard object like a stone can injure the bottom of the heel. If you stepped on something recently, try to rest and protect the foot for a few days until it feels better. Wear shoes when you go outside to prevent this from happening in the future.

PAIN BEHIND THE HEEL



Pain in the back of the heel is usually due to a problem with the Achilles tendon. This tendon connects the heel bone to the calf muscle. Heavy activity or exercise can put too much stress on the tendon too quickly. This can cause Achilles tendinitis, which includes small tears and inflammation in the tendon.

Treatment may include:

- Physical therapy
- Rest
- Ice
- Orthotic(s) (shoe inserts)
- Night splint (device worn at night to protect the foot and tendon)

People who have Achilles tendinitis may need to avoid the activity that caused it, such as running or jumping.

RESPECT YOUR FEET



Many people ignore heel pain, hoping it will go away. But, untreated problems with the foot may only get worse over time without treatment. If your heel pain lasts more than a couple of days, or if you have a health condition like diabetes, see a doctor right away.

Talking about oral cancer

More than 10,000 people will die of oral cancer this year. Oral cancer is not one type of cancer.

It is a group of cancers that may affect the:

- Lips
- Inside of the cheeks
- Gums
- Tongue
- Inside the mouth (roof or floor of the mouth)
- Tonsils
- Middle of the throat



WATCHING YOUR MOUTH

Knowing the signs of oral cancer is important. If it's caught early, the outcome is better. So, look regularly for any changes in your mouth and see a dentist if you notice anything.

Signs of oral cancer may include:

- Numbness, pain or tender areas in the mouth or lips
- A sore or irritated area in the mouth that doesn't go away
- A white or red patch
- A lump in the mouth or throat
- An area that feels thicker or rougher than normal
- Trouble with chewing, swallowing or speaking
- Trouble moving the tongue, mouth or jaw
- Teeth that appear to have moved or don't fit together properly anymore
- Feeling like something is in your throat
- Change in voice not due to a cold or common illness

Many of these symptoms are due to simple, treatable problems. But, it's important to get them checked by a dentist quickly. Your dentist can diagnose the problem and get you started on the treatment you need.



AM I AT RISK?

Certain things can make oral cancer more likely to happen. Researchers say that men are more than twice as likely to get oral cancer than women. People who smoke or drink large amounts of alcohol are also at a higher risk. This is especially true if they are over 50 years old.

Some oral cancers are caused by a virus known as the human papilloma virus (HPV). You can catch HPV through sexual contact, which can cause certain cancers in the throat and back of the mouth.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- Get regular dental checkups. Your dentist can check for symptoms of oral cancer.
- Tell your dentist about any changes to your lips, teeth, gums, mouth, tongue or throat.
- Don't smoke – or quit if you do smoke.
- Drink only moderate amounts of alcohol or less. This is usually two drinks for men per day, and one drink for women per day.
- Talk to your doctor about whether you should get the HPV vaccine.

Magnificent magnesium

Magnesium plays a role in more than 300 functions in the body. It is needed for muscle and nerve function, bone health, blood sugar control and regulating blood pressure. We also need magnesium to release energy in our body.

Long-term low levels of magnesium could be linked to certain health problems like migraine headaches, osteoporosis, type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure. This doesn't mean magnesium can cure these diseases. It also doesn't mean that low magnesium is the only cause. Many factors are involved with these health conditions. Researchers are still working to learn how magnesium is connected to these health conditions.



TODAY'S FOODS & MAGNESIUM

The recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for magnesium is 320 mg for women and 420 mg for men. Most people get their magnesium from food.

But, some researchers believe that levels of magnesium in foods may be getting lower. Also, magnesium is not found in most processed or packaged foods. That's why it's recommended to get the magnesium your body needs by eating healthy foods.

People with type 2 diabetes or digestive diseases may have a higher risk of not getting enough magnesium. In addition, certain medicines can cause depletion of magnesium. These medicines include:

- Loop diuretics, including furosemide and bumetanide
- Thiazide diuretics, including hydrochlorothiazide and ethacrynic acid
- Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs), including esomeprazole magnesium and lansoprazole

If you take these medicines, your doctor may talk to you about your magnesium levels and whether you need extra magnesium.

SHOULD I TAKE A SUPPLEMENT?

There are many different types of magnesium supplements. Some do not absorb in the body very well. High doses of magnesium supplements can cause diarrhea, nausea, and stomach cramps. Extremely high doses can also be toxic.



Magnesium can also interact with certain medicines. If you take any of the following medicines, do not take magnesium supplements within two hours of taking your medication:

- Biophosphonates like alendronate, which treat osteoporosis
- Antibiotics including tetracyclines and quinolones

However, getting magnesium from healthy foods does not cause these side effects. If you're interested in a supplement, always ask your doctor first to be sure it's safe for you.

Foods with magnesium

To boost your magnesium levels and get other healthy nutrients, try to eat these foods regularly:



Almonds



Spinach



Cashews



Peanuts & peanut butter



Black beans



Edamame



Avocado



Fortified breakfast cereals



Brown rice

If you're eating fortified cereal or peanut butter, look for types without added sugar or salt. Also, be mindful of the amount of fat and calories in nuts and nut butter. While these foods can be part of a healthy diet, the recommended serving sizes are usually small.

RECIPE: Brown rice pilaf

Brown rice and almonds are both good sources of magnesium. They also offer fiber and protein. This simple side dish can be a meatless main dish, paired with a green salad and some fruit.



Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups brown rice (rinsed)
- 3 cups water
- ¼ cup almonds (chopped)
- 1 teaspoon parsley (dried)
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

Directions

1. Place all ingredients in a rice cooker and cook until the water evaporates, about 30 minutes. You can also cook rice on the stovetop as directed on the package.
2. Fluff cooked rice with a fork. Add almonds, parsley, garlic powder and black pepper.

Nutrition Facts: Serving size: 1 cup, 1/4 of recipe. Calories 320; Total Fat 8 g; Saturated Fat 1 g; Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 53 mg; Total Carbohydrate 56 g; Dietary Fiber 5 g; Protein 8 g

Source: What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl

Be smart about credit card offers

OFFERS IN THE MAIL

Credit card companies, auto loan companies and other lenders can get a list of names for their credit card offers. They get information from credit reporting agencies about people who have a minimum credit score. Then, they use that list to send out offers for a new card.

SAYING "NO" TO MAIL OFFERS

If you are receiving credit card offers in the mail and don't want them, there are two things you can do.

You can opt out of credit card offers for five years. Call 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688) or visit optoutprescreen.com. To opt out forever, you must download and mail a signed paper form. You can get the form on the opt-out website.

Beware – the opt-out feature only works for certain credit card offers, though. Companies may get your name if they have done business with you before. They may also get your name from other sources that aren't connected to the credit reporting agencies, such as memberships or subscriptions.

WHY IS MY CHILD GETTING A CREDIT CARD OFFER?

Sometimes, a person under 21 years of age gets a credit card offer in the mail. This may happen if the company purchased a list of names and didn't know that the person was not an adult. But, credit card companies cannot intentionally send their offers to people under 21 years old without permission.



PHONE CALLS

Like mail offers, credit card companies can get your name from credit agencies and call you with an offer. You can register your number with the National Do Not Call Registry to stop these calls. Visit www.donotcall.gov or call 1-888-382-1222 to put your phone number on the do not call list.

WHAT IS A PRESCREENED CREDIT CARD OFFER?

Credit card companies can find out if you have a certain credit score. Then, they can offer you a credit card based on that information. This is known as a prescreened offer because they already have some information about your credit. It is not a guarantee that you will get the card. You still have to apply for it and be approved.



4 “S”s

of an exercise plan



1

SWEAT

Walking, jogging, stair climbing or biking are aerobic exercises. They get your heart pumping and your body sweating. These exercises are good for heart health and help to shed pounds.

2

STRENGTHEN

You don't have to lift weights to get healthier muscles. Push-ups, using a resistance band, or lifting cans of soup will help tone your muscles. These exercises help build stronger bones, too.

3

STAY STILL

Balance is an important way to help prevent falls and make you more coordinated. Try standing on one leg, using an exercise ball, or practicing yoga or tai chi.

4

STRETCH

Muscles need to be flexible to help prevent injury or soreness. Stretch gently after each workout as part of your cool-down.



Keeping cool when work heats up

Have you ever been in a tense situation at work? Perhaps two people were arguing or someone got angry with you.

Though it's hard to stay calm in these types of situations, it's the best thing you can do. If you don't react strongly, you can help defuse tension and find a helpful resolution.

FOCUS ON A SOLUTION

It's easy to get wrapped up in the problem, not the solution. Ask yourself, "what are we trying to accomplish?" Many workplace arguments start because two people have different ideas about what should be done. But, both people ultimately want to fix the same problem.

Sometimes, an argument can be stopped if both parties remember what they both want: a good outcome. Talk about what you agree upon, and try to build from there.

TAKE PAUSE

When something stressful is happening, your body immediately wants to respond. You may feel tense and anxious. You may also want to run from the situation or defend yourself. This is a normal "fight-or-flight" response that wants to protect you. But, this isn't always the best way to react. Here's how you can stay in control:

- **Watch your breathing.** Take deep, slow breaths to help calm your body's natural response to stress. This can help you think more clearly and lower your anxious feelings.
- **Think before you speak.** It's okay to pause before answering a question. Also, you can say, "Let me think about that for a moment." This gives you time to come up with a professional response, rather than an angry one.
- **Wait to hit "send."** Read emails out loud to yourself before you send them. Save the draft and wait before you send it if you're angry. This can help avoid something you will later regret.

