

ADVANTAGE

Your resource for health and wellness

WORKING WELL

Feel your best—and get things done



HEART CARE: HOW OLD IS YOUR TICKER?

INTERVAL TRAINING: BOOST YOUR WORKOUTS

LENTIL BARLEY SOUP: A BOWL OF COMFORT

advantage > you

Welcome, New Members!



At Western Health Advantage, new members are greeted with fast, accurate and personal service. We're eager to help you learn how your health plan coverage, benefits and services work.

One of the first things you should do is create a secure account at mywha.org. (Continuing members who haven't done this yet should do this too!) Once you're logged in, visit our healthy living section for access to gym discounts, classes, info and services to help you find balance and live healthier.

Want to enjoy better health? Our new wellness program, MyWHA Wellness, has one-click access to online health and wellness tools, disease management services and a Nurse24SM advice line. Complete your wellness assessment with our partner AlereTM and you'll be on your way to developing a personalized health improvement plan featuring customized health trackers and self-guided online coaching.

We're here to help. If you have any questions, please call WHA's Member Services department at 888.563.2250.

Garry Maisel

Chief Executive Officer
Western Health Advantage



TIDBITS

Soup's On!

Who doesn't love soup on a cold winter's day? Besides the warmth and comfort soup can bring during chilly months, soup can be super tasty and offers many health benefits!

- Soup can help weight loss. We tend to eat soup slowly, and eating slowly may help us feel full faster. That's because our brain receives a signal that we're full sooner, potentially limiting additional calories eaten. Those who eat soup as an appetizer tend to eat 20 percent fewer calories during their main course.
- Soup is hydrating. A bowl of soup may contribute 1 to 2 more cups of fluid to your diet. But don't think soup can be eaten only in the winter. Chilled soup is also a fabulous addition to a summer meal.
- Looking for a way to add more vegetables and fiber to your diet? Make soup with a variety of vegetables, beans and other legumes for a fiber-packed meal full of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.
- Stay away from soups with heavy creams and cheese. Store-bought soups tend to be high in sodium. To create a healthful, homemade, nutrient-dense soup, use a basic broth or stock and add lean proteins such as poultry, fish or beans.
- Soups are very affordable and can be made in batches and frozen for another day. They're simple yet scrumptious.

Western
Health
Advantage



ADVANTAGE MAGAZINE

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3 Questions

Lisa Angst, of WHA Member Services, notes some changes for 2016



Are there any benefit changes for 2016?

On Jan. 1, 2016, WHA began using Accredo, a specialty pharmacy network, for direct delivery of specialty medications to WHA members. Specialty medications treat complex, chronic and/or rare conditions. Accredo provides safe, prompt and convenient mail-order services, including online ordering to refill your medications and check your order status. Accredo's specialty pharmacy staff understands the complexities associated with specialty medications and provides continuous patient education, ongoing monitoring for safety and efficacy, and medication management. They are available 24/7 to answer questions about benefits and orders. Note: This change impacts specialty medications only. You can continue to fill your prescriptions for regular medications at local retail pharmacies.

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Anything else?

WHA's wellness program has a new name and a new partner! Effective Jan. 1, 2016, our wellness program—MyWHA Wellness—is provided by Alere™. Enjoy one-click access at mywha.org/wellness to Alere's online health and wellness tools, disease management services and Nurse24SM advice line.

If I receive a bill in 2016 for services that were rendered in 2015, does the bill apply toward my 2016 deductible or out-of-pocket maximum?

No. As of Jan. 1, 2016, the calendar year deductible and out-of-pocket maximum restarts; if you had any services in 2015, those services would apply toward your 2015 deductible and/or out-of-pocket maximum. Any covered services you receive in 2016 will apply toward your 2016 deductible and/or out-of-pocket maximum.

For info, call Member Services at 888.563.2250. They'll be happy to help.



HOT TICKET: #1000menstrong

JOIN OUR GREAT TEAM AND SUPPORT A GREAT CAUSE!

On April 23, 2016, Capitol Mall will be taken over by more than 1,100 men—business leaders, elected officials, husbands, neighbors—who will walk, run and limp the 1-mile course while wearing high heels to support WEAVE. Western Health Advantage is proud to again be the presenting sponsor for this worthy event.

In 2015, 1,113 brave men donned high heels to raise awareness and critical funds to ensure 24-hour services are available for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.

What: Walk a Mile in Her Shoes

When: Saturday, April 23, 2016

Where: Capitol Mall

Join our team and we'll pay your \$45 registration fee. Contact community@westernhealth.com to be a part of WHA's team!

Marin General Hospital Expands

Groundbreaking begins this January on the new \$550 million facility, which will meet earthquake and safety standards and have added ED capabilities and larger ORs. Most patient rooms will be private with a view. Opening is planned for 2020.

9–16%

That's the estimated percentage of new moms who will experience postpartum depression (PPD), a serious mental health problem affecting mothers who have just given birth. Common symptoms include feelings of anxiety, guilt and fear; loss of pleasure or interest in life; excessive problems with sleeping; and thoughts of self-harm or harm against the child. The good news: PPD can be treated with adequate and timely mental health care.

Source: American Psychological Association

Expectant and new moms: Get the help you need. Visit mywha.org/bh for info about mental health resources that are available. For info about your behavioral health benefits, call the phone number on the back of your WHA member card.

1 in 8

That's the estimated probability that a woman in California will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.

Source: California Cancer Facts and Figures 2014

Stay up to date with your mammograms. After you get a mammogram, enter for a chance to win a \$100 gift card.* Complete the online form at mywha.org/women.

***To qualify, the exam must have been performed by a WHA provider in the past year and you must have been an active member at the time of service. Limited to one submission per year.**

Tone Up With Dr. Tanji

A beginner's guide to high-intensity interval training from Dr. Jeffrey Tanji, associate medical director, Sports Medicine, UC Davis Health System

High-intensity interval training (HIIT) is an extremely popular method of exercise that involves increasing the heart rate to a high level—75 to 95 percent of your maximum heart rate—for short intervals of time, followed by short periods of recovery. HIIT will improve your aerobic cardiovascular fitness at a much higher level than you would achieve doing only moderate-intensity training. HIIT also helps improve speed.

You can incorporate high-intensity bursts into what you're already doing. If you cycle, jog or swim, one standard approach—called the Tabata protocol—involves 20 seconds of high-intensity activity, followed by 10 seconds of lower-intensity activity. (The general range is 15 to 60 seconds for high-intensity bursts, followed by 10 to 30 seconds of recovery.) Many group fitness classes also incorporate HIIT.

When changing your exercise program, it's better to do too little than too much. That's why we typically recommend starting with three to five sets and gradually increasing those numbers. Once you build up to it, 30 to 60 minutes of HIIT twice a week can fulfill the national recommendation of two bouts per week of whole-body exercise. (In addition, we recommend 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity activity, such as walking, swimming, bicycling or jogging.)

As for warming up and cooling down, the best routines involve doing your regular activity at a really easy level for about five minutes. Another important rule of thumb: Never do HIIT on back-to-back days.

If you're over age 40 or have cardiovascular risk factors or certain chronic conditions, check with your doctor before starting a vigorous exercise routine. Use common sense too: If you can barely move the morning after a workout, your body is saying, "You did too much"—and it's time for you to listen.





Options for Colorectal Cancer Screening

From the desk of Donald B. Hufford, M.D., WHA chief medical officer

Vital facts about colorectal cancer and screening: This type of cancer develops in the colon or the rectum, also known as the large intestine. Screening has the potential to prevent cancer because it can detect precancerous growths—called polyps—in the colon and rectum. Even though most polyps won't become cancerous, removing them can prevent cancer from occurring. Regular screening also increases the odds that any colorectal cancers that do develop will be found early when they're likelier to be cured and treatment is less extensive.

When it comes to choosing among today's various colorectal cancer screening tests, Western Health Advantage follows recommendations of the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), an independent panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine. USPSTF's

guidelines are broadly accepted across the nation, including by the federal government.

The USPSTF recommends screening for colorectal cancer starting at age 50 years and continuing until age 75 years. People at higher risk should begin screening at a younger age and may need more frequent testing. The decision to be screened after age 75 should be made on an individual basis, in consultation with your doctor.

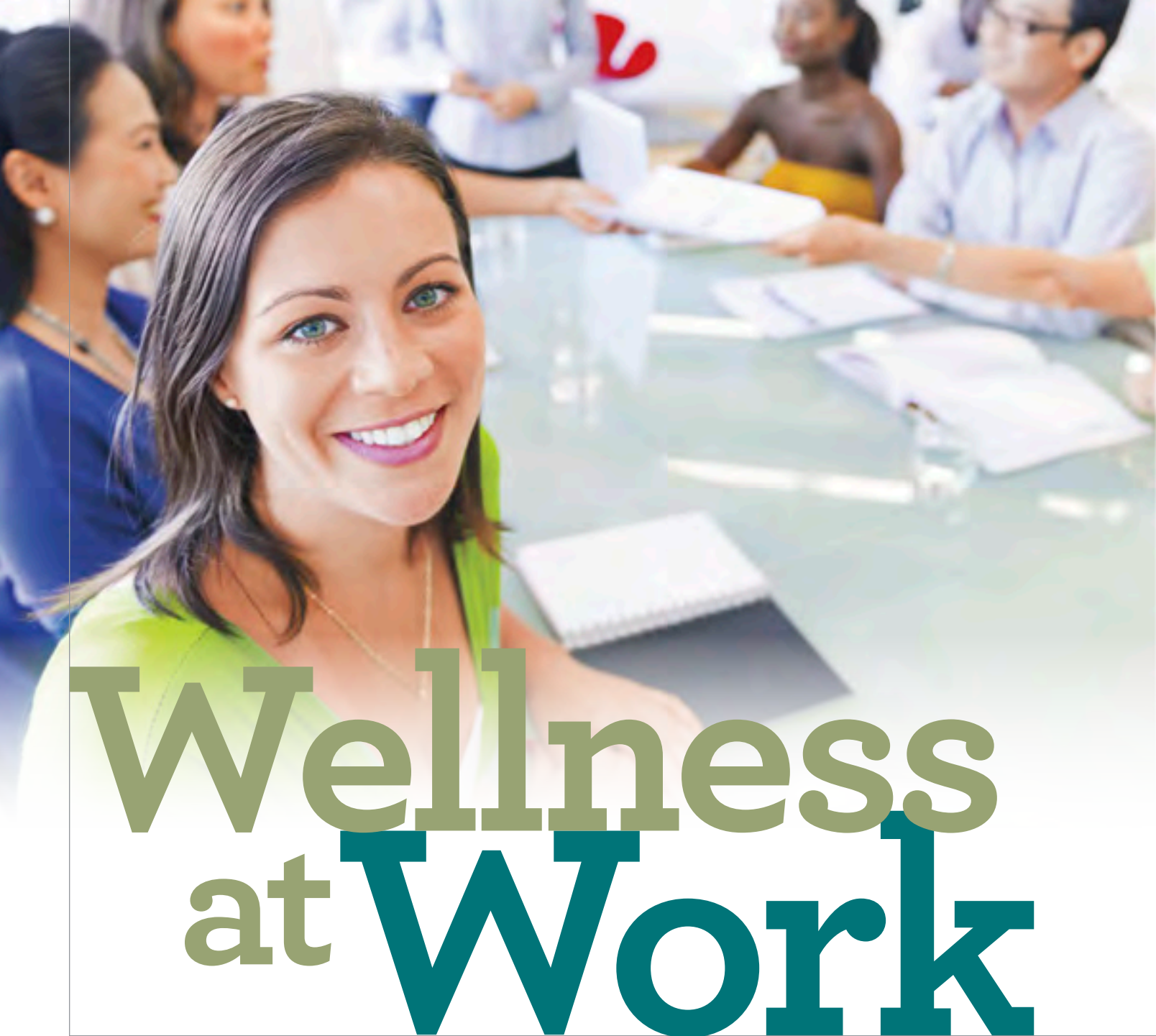
Here are current options for USPSTF-advised tests and intervals:

- **High-sensitivity fecal occult blood test (FOBT)**, which checks for hidden blood in stool samples; should be done every year.
- **Flexible sigmoidoscopy**, in which a physician uses a flexible, lighted tube (sigmoidoscope) to check interior walls of the rectum and part of the colon; should be done every five years with FOBT every three years.

- **Colonoscopy** is also performed by a doctor with a flexible, lighted tube (colonoscope), but it is used to check the *entire colon* and the rectum's interior walls; should be done every 10 years. During this procedure, tissue samples may be collected for closer inspection, or polyps may be removed. (Colonoscopies can also be used when results of other screening tests are positive.)

One other thing to know: Medical science isn't in perfect agreement about the specifics of recommended guidelines. The American Cancer Society, for example, also recommends several other screening tests—including "virtual colonoscopy," which is a CT scan of the colon and rectum.

The bottom line (pun intended)? Get screened. To figure how and when, talk to your doctor and together decide what's best for you.



Wellness at Work

Even if you love your job, you probably have days when you feel like you can't keep up with its demands. This guide offers strategies to help you manage work-related stress, use healthful ergonomics in your work space and keep burnout at bay—from 9 to 5 and beyond.

Stress Less on the Job

65 percent of Americans consider work a top source of stress

For many of us, stress is a familiar, albeit unwelcome, part of daily life. Here are some healthy responses to trying situations that might arise in your professional life.

Managing your workload: Break up big projects into manageable tasks and focus on one task at a time. Learn to say no, respectfully, to requests to work after your shift is over. Consider meeting with your supervisor to determine his or her priorities and help you identify wellness resources and support available through your employer.

Deadlines: When possible, plan ahead. Start projects well in advance of their delivery dates.

Punctuality: To avoid being tardy, set your watch five to 10 minutes ahead. Identify/manage time-wasters, and set time limits for activities that take up valuable time. For example, tell a chatty co-worker: "I have only five minutes to go over this." Remember to be diplomatic and kind as these same co-workers can also be a source of support.

Emergency situations: If you feel stress mounting, the American Heart Association recommends trying one

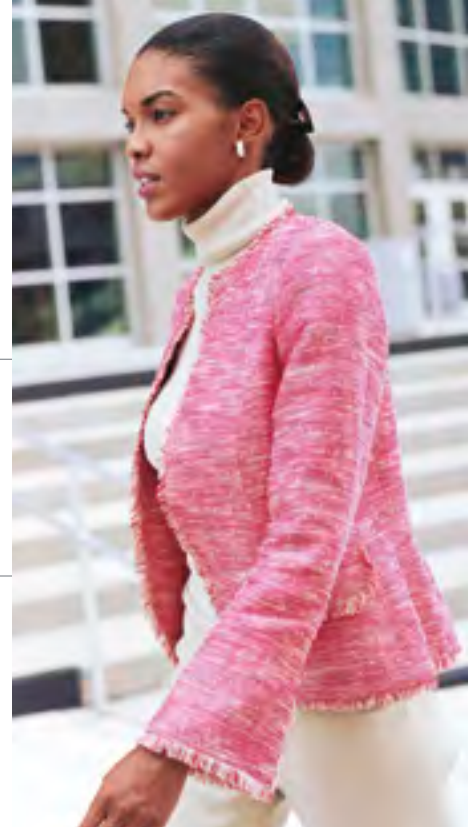
or more of the following "emergency stress stoppers."

- Count to 10 before speaking.
- Take a few deep breaths.
- Request time to tackle the situation on your terms.
- Take a walk.
- Apologize if you make a mistake.
- Counter negativity with prayer or meditation, which you can do quietly at your desk or in the boardroom.

On a daily basis, combat stress with healthy habits.

- Try positive self-talk such as, "I've got this."
- Exercise regularly. Dedicate at least 15 minutes each day to an activity you enjoy.
- Share feelings and laughter with family and friends.
- Sleep six to eight hours every night.
- Vow to quit smoking, and consume alcohol and caffeine in moderation.
- Set work-life boundaries (see "The Work-Life Balancing Act," page 8).
- Seek professional support from a counselor or mental health provider.

Sources: American Heart Association, American Psychological Association, Mayo Clinic



The Case for Walking at Lunch

Turns out taking a lunchtime stroll might offer more than just physical benefits. According to a recent study, participants—sedentary employees of a large university in the U.K.—who walked 30 minutes at lunchtime three times a week for 10 weeks reported feeling more enthusiastic and relaxed and less nervous at work. In another recent study, researchers found that walking boosts creative thinking. Yet another benefit of stepping out at lunch: Time away from work helps you decompress, recharge and return to your desk ready to focus.

Sources: American Heart Association; American Psychological Association; Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition; Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports



The Work-Life Balancing Act

Tips for protecting your time and controlling your use of technology

Setting work-life boundaries can be challenging, but doing so can have a positive effect on your relationships and stress levels. Here are some ideas to help you strike a better balance.

Control your schedule. Maintaining to-do lists—one for work and one for your personal life—can help you focus on your priorities. Cut back on checking your email; experts recommend checking once in late morning, once in the early afternoon and once near the end of your workday. By not checking your inbox first thing, you avoid having to respond to other people's needs right away.

Track and manage your time.

Determine which tasks to focus on and which you can let go of or delegate, if possible. Distribute household chores over a number of days instead of saving all of them for your day off. Make time for activities you enjoy, including family time or volunteering.

Reduce distractions. If you're interrupted, it can take two or three times as long as the interruption to return your attention to a particular task.

Work efficiently. According to some experts, most of us max out on concentration after approximately 90 minutes. They recommend switching to another task after that hour and a half expires.

Rest your eyes. Look away from the screen every 20 minutes and gaze at a distant object. For every two hours of screen time, take a 15-minute break. If possible, go outside—myopia (near-sightedness) is on the rise due to too much close work (computers and reading) and too little time outdoors. Also, remember to blink.

No devices at the dinner table.

Keeping mealtimes free of electronics and carving out unplugged family time will help you connect with your family through play and interaction—and model healthy habits for your kids.

Don't skimp on sleep. It helps to keep the bedroom low-tech—keep devices out and use your bed for sleep and sex only. The blue light from LED screens, responding to work emails before bed, and late-night beeps and buzzes can all interfere with sleep. It's better to wind down with a relaxing activity about an hour before bedtime.

Take time off. Whether you leave town or simply power down your smartphone, "switching off" from work and focusing on other things will help you recover from work-related stress.

Ask about scheduling flexibility.

Find out if flex hours, telecommuting or a compressed workweek are options for you.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics, American Heart Association, American Psychological Association, Cleveland Clinic, Mayo Clinic, National Sleep Foundation



Prevent Hand and Wrist Pain

To minimize computer-related stress and strain on your hands and wrists:

- Keep your hands in a relaxed, neutral position when typing; a foam or gel wrist support could be helpful.
- When possible, take stretch breaks, alternate tasks and use keyboard commands instead of clicking.
- Pay attention to your posture—hunching over compresses the nerves in your neck, which can affect nerves in your wrists, fingers and hands.
- Keep your hands warm.

Sources: Harvard Health Publications, Mayo Clinic, Occupational Safety & Health Administration

Pro Tips for Healthy Computing

Make sure your workstation is adjustable so you can easily alternate postures throughout the workday

If you work at a computer, aiming for a “neutral” body position—meaning your joints are naturally aligned—will help reduce stress and strain on your muscles, tendons and skeletal system, as well as your risk of developing a musculoskeletal disorder.

When setting up your workstation, keep these guidelines in mind:

Chair: Your adjustable chair should have a backrest (and, if it helps, a cushion or rolled-up towel) that offers lumbar support and conforms to the curve of your spine, a comfy seat that lets you place your feet flat on the floor (or on a footrest), soft armrests that keep your shoulders relaxed and your elbows close to your body, and a five-leg base with casters. Your knees should be about level with your hips.

Monitor: Place your screen directly in front of you, 20 to 28 inches away, with the top of the screen at or just below eye level. Your head should be level (or tilting slightly forward) and roughly in line with your torso.

Keyboard: When typing, make sure your shoulders remain relaxed, keep your elbows close to your body, and keep your wrists straight and in line with your forearms.

Mouse: Maintain a straight, neutral wrist posture when using a mouse.

Phone: Use a headset or speaker-phone, especially if you type or write while you talk.

Desk: Adjust the height—and make sure there’s a large enough surface—to accommodate the above components. Without stretching, you should be able to reach key items, such as your phone and stapler. Avoid storing things underneath.

Don’t forget to adjust your working position throughout the workday—periodically adjust your chair or backrest; stretch your fingers, hands, arms and torso; and get up and move around.

If you use a standing desk (or a high table or counter), most of these pointers apply. A neutral standing position means your legs, torso, neck and head are roughly in line and vertical. Your elbows should remain close to your body and your wrists straight. If you’d like, use a footrest to elevate one foot.

Sources: Cleveland Clinic, Mayo Clinic, Occupational Safety & Health Administration

LUNG HEALTH

by the Numbers

If Breathing Is a Problem

Breathing is often taken for granted—about 17,280 to 23,040 daily respirations for a normal adult at rest—but not if you have a medical condition that impairs the process. To learn more about lung health, check the stats and info on these pages. To find out about Alere's individualized support for WHA members who have asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), call 877.793.3655 or visit mywha.org/dm.

Sources include Asthma in California, a Surveillance Report; The Burden of Chronic Disease and Injury, California, 2013; California Tobacco Facts and Figures 2015; State Health Officer's Report on E-Cigarettes

ASTHMA AND COPD

Nearly 3 million

That's a recent estimate of the number of Californians who have asthma, a condition in which airways narrow, swell and produce extra mucus.

To breathe easier: Minimizing asthma symptoms improves quality of life and depends on having good treatment (which can include regular doses of long-term asthma control medications and "rescue medications," as needed) and a written asthma action plan. If you have asthma, work with your doctor to outline your daily treatment, learn how to handle attacks, know when to go to the doctor or ER, etc.

To download an asthma action plan: Visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/lung/asthma_actplan.pdf.

Less than 40%

That's the small percentage of California adults and children who use asthma controller medications that report using them properly.

To breathe easier: If you have asthma, it's vital to take medicines as prescribed. For many people, that means regularly taking long-term asthma control medications, even when you don't feel symptoms, and using "rescue medications," as called for, to treat an asthma attack or prevent one. FYI: If you frequently use quick-relief meds to treat symptoms, your asthma isn't under control, which increases your risk of future asthma attacks. See your doctor about making treatment changes.

Up to 50%

That's the estimated percentage of people who have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) but don't know it. COPD is the fourth leading cause of death in California and actually refers to two diseases (emphysema and chronic bronchitis) that gradually

make it harder and harder to breathe.

To breathe easier: Know the symptoms of COPD. In the early stages, there may be no symptoms, or you may have a nagging cough; shortness of breath, especially with physical activity; wheezing; and tightness in the chest. See your doctor if you see these signs. Note: Over time, COPD gets worse. You can't undo its damage to your lungs, but steps can be taken to prevent more damage and help you feel better.

SMOKING

3.8 million

That's the recent count of smokers in California.

To breathe easier: Quit smoking. When you do, over time you'll greatly lower your risk of death from lung cancer and other diseases, such as stroke, heart disease, chronic bronchitis, emphysema and at least 13 other kinds of cancer. (Smoking accounts for as many as 8 of 10 COPD-related deaths.) You'll also cut back on dangerous secondhand smoke for your loved ones.

To find info and help: WHA members can get online support, tools and instruction on smoking cessation at mywha.org/wellness or call 888.563.2250.

Teens opt for E-CIGARETTES

In 2014, teens' use of e-cigarettes (battery-operated smoking devices) topped use of traditional cigarettes for the first time ever.

To breathe easier: Help your entire family stay healthier by being aware of concerns over e-cigarettes. Not much is known yet about health risks of using them or whether they help people quit smoking. E-cigs contain nicotine and emit toxic chemicals in the form of an aerosol. The aerosol contains at least 10 chemicals on California's Prop 65 list of chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects and other reproductive harm.

Is Your Heart ‘Older’ Than You Are?

Three out of four American adults have a heart that’s “older” than their years, which means they’re at higher risk for stroke and heart attack. How old is your ticker?

Researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) came up with the idea of “heart age” as a way to alert us all to our risks of dying from heart attack or stroke and to encourage adoption of healthy habits that lower those risks. They reported their findings in a recent *Vital Signs* report (cdc.gov/vitalsigns/heartage/index.html).

The CDC’s calculations of “heart age” are based on a risk profile that includes blood pressure, body mass index (BMI), diabetes and smoking history. A 53-year-old woman, for example, may discover that her heart age is 75 because she has uncontrolled high blood pressure or smokes. Or a 45-year-old man who smokes and has diabetes and untreated high blood pressure may learn his heart is 30 years “older” than he is.

Here are some of the CDC report’s other key findings:

- In the U.S., the average adult woman has a heart age that’s five years older than her chronological age; the average man’s heart is eight years older.
- Heart age is highest among blacks, but, on average, heart age exceeds chronological age in all U.S. racial/ethnic groups.
- Among both sexes, excess heart age decreases with more education and household income.



FOR A YOUNGER HEART

The American Heart Association says to focus on these lifestyle changes.

High blood pressure: Aim to get it controlled.

- Improve your diet and reduce your salt intake.
- Enjoy regular physical activity.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Manage stress.
- Avoid tobacco smoke.
- Comply with medication prescriptions.
- If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.
- Understand hot tub safety.

High cholesterol, diabetes: To manage your cholesterol or diabetes, work with your doctor on a treatment plan.

Tobacco use: If you smoke, get help to quit. If you don’t smoke, don’t start. Avoid secondhand smoke.

Unhealthy diet: Eat a healthy diet that’s high in fresh veggies and fruits and low in sodium and trans fats.

Physical inactivity: Get 150 minutes every week of moderate-intensity exercise such as brisk walking.

Obesity: Maintain a healthy weight.

Checking the ‘Age’ of Your Ticker

To figure out your heart age, visit cdc.gov/vitalsigns/cardiovascular-disease/heartage.html. Note: You’ll need to know your BMI (to calculate, visit cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi) and your systolic blood pressure (the upper number).

Checkups: Stay Up to Date

Americans—especially men, researchers say—find lots of reasons to avoid going to the doctor, such as cost, time and the assumption they're perfectly healthy. Whatever the reason, here's a good one for scheduling a checkup today: Some conditions, including high cholesterol and high blood pressure, don't have symptoms. Diagnosing them early can make treatment easier and prevent serious problems like diabetes, heart attack and stroke.

Maximize Annual Wellness Visits

Your annual wellness visit is an excellent time to catch up on screenings for conditions such as high blood pressure and cholesterol, depression, and certain cancers and to find out which immunizations you need. (Go to mywha.org/preventive to learn of WHA's preventive health guidelines.) Shots aren't just for kids, since protection from vaccines can decrease over time and additional vaccines may become necessary as you get older or if your health status

changes. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- Most Americans should get a flu vaccine each year.
- Women should get the Tdap vaccine (protects against tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough) during each pregnancy.
- Older adults should get vaccinated against shingles and pneumococcal disease, which can include pneumonia, meningitis and blood infections.

Be Candid About Your Concerns

In addition to your physical exam, which includes checking your height, weight, body mass index and blood pressure, your checkup is an opportunity to review existing health conditions and discuss any new symptoms or concerns. Providing info about your family health history and speaking openly about your lifestyle and adherence to medications will help your doctor evaluate your risk for certain diseases and develop a plan for safeguarding your health.



AT WHA, MANY PREVENTIVE SERVICES, INCLUDING SOME SHOTS, CERTAIN SCREENINGS AND WELLNESS VISITS, ARE FREE.

Got a High-Deductible Health Plan?

If financial fears are keeping you away from the doctor, remember:

- Preventive services are free.
- If a health issue arises, delaying care could cost you a lot more.
- To save money on medications, ask if there's a generic version of the drug your doctor plans to prescribe and sign up for Express Scripts, a money-saving mail-order pharmacy service.

For more info about managing your high-deductible health plan, visit mywha.org/deductible.

Follow Up With Your PCP

At the end of your checkup, make sure you understand your doctor's instructions and schedule any recommended follow-up appointments. If you need clarification later, contact your doctor's office and ask to leave a message or speak with a nurse.

NOTE: If you start a new medication or seek care in urgent care or the emergency room, be sure to arrange follow-up care with your own doctor. **Call your doctor immediately** if you start feeling worse or develop issues with your medication.



WHA's Wellness Program Gets Better

WHA'S WELLNESS PROGRAM has a new name and a new partner! As of Jan. 1, 2016, our wellness program—now called MyWHA Wellness—is being provided by Alere™. Alere is a familiar name to many WHA members, particularly those who have been enrolled in one of our disease management programs or have used our Nurse24SM advice line services.

As part of the transition to Alere, some features of the previous wellness program, including personal health assessments, are no longer accessible. Fortunately, these have been replaced by new wellness tools. See the back cover for more about this improved WHA benefit.

WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE?

Kelly Brothers offers tips on achieving personal goals



CareerBuilder recently came out with its annual study of the most absurd excuses people have used for getting off work. "I was stuck under my bed." "My wife found out I was cheating and I spent the day retrieving my belongings from the dumpster." "My grandmother poisoned me with ham."

We all use excuses. Perhaps the most debilitating are the excuses we tell ourselves. I haven't exercised this week because____. I know I shouldn't eat this, but (insert rationalization here). My goal was to pay off my credit card this month, but (insert dubious alibi here).

Here is a simple way to increase your odds of following through on your personal goals. WRITE THEM DOWN. A growing body of research shows that those who write down their goals accomplish significantly

more than those who do not. A few decades ago, Harvard surveyed its graduating MBA class and found that only 3 percent had taken the time to write down their life goals. Ten years later they were astounded to discover those 3 percent were earning 10 times what the other 97 percent were earning put together!

Here are some easy steps for your own goal-setting:

- Formulate your goals (make sure they are measurable).
- Write them down.
- Celebrate successes.
- Come up with new goals.

Furthermore, there is evidence that the physical act of writing on paper is more effective than typing. So if your New Year's resolutions have already fallen away, come up with new ones and put pen to paper. Good luck!



LENTIL BARLEY SOUP

High in fiber and protein, low in fat, and rich in flavor, this soup makes an easy meal.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups dried lentils (rinsed)
- 4 scallions
- 5 carrots (chopped)
- 2 stalks of celery (chopped)
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- ½ cup pearl barley
- 12 cups water
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) low-sodium whole peeled tomatoes (coarsely chopped)
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- ½ teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Place a large soup pot on the stove and add lentils, scallions, carrots, celery, oregano, barley and water. Bring to a boil.
 2. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, uncovered, for 1 hour.
 3. Add the tomatoes and continue cooking about 45 minutes. Just before serving, add vinegar and salt.
- Serves 6; serving size: 2 cups.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

Total calories: 155

Total fat: 1 g

Protein: 9 g

Carbohydrates: 30 g

Dietary fiber: 9 g

Saturated fat: 0 g

Sodium: 149 mg

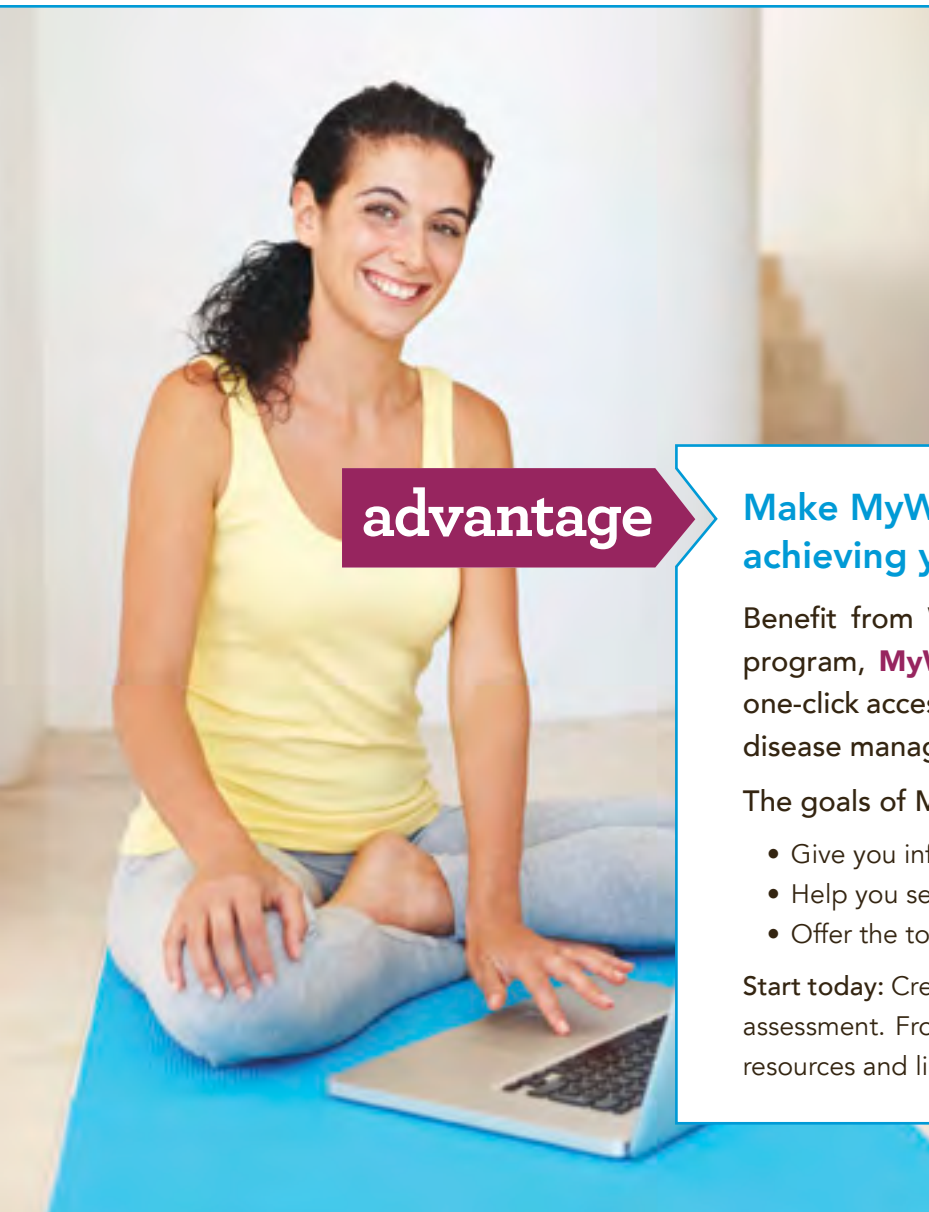
Source: USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion



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advantage



Make MyWHA Wellness your first source for achieving your health and wellness goals.

Benefit from Western Health Advantage's new wellness program, **MyWHA Wellness**, provided by Alere™. Enjoy one-click access to Alere's online health and wellness tools, disease management services and Nurse24SM advice line.

The goals of MyWHA Wellness are to:

- Give you information about your current health.
- Help you set personalized and realistic wellness goals.
- Offer the tools and resources you need to reach your goals.

Start today: Create an Alere account and complete your wellness assessment. From there, start taking advantage of the library of resources and line-up of tools waiting for you.

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