Treasures of the Golden State

Exploring parks, native gardens and urban farms can boost your health and well-being

QUIZ: Women and Heart Health
EXERCISE: What’s Up With Your Core?
OUR MOBILE APP: Download MyWHA
RECIPE: Fruit Skewers With Yogurt Dip
Are You Getting Enough Fruit in Your Diet?

Most Americans are not eating enough fruit. According to the USDA’s guidelines, half of our plate should consist of fruits and vegetables. For example, for a 2,000-calorie diet, the USDA recommends eating two cups of fruit a day.

Stocking up on fruits can lead to better health, bringing necessary vitamins, minerals, fiber and antioxidants to your diet. These protect against chronic diseases such as heart attacks, stroke and cancer.

Substituting fruit for higher-calorie snacks can benefit your waistline as well. Eating bananas and other fruits that are rich in potassium may lower blood pressure, reduce the risk of developing kidney stones and help to decrease bone loss. As an added bonus, fruit has no cholesterol.

The best way to eat fruit is as a whole food, rather than as a juice. Juices are stripped of fiber and they have lots of sugar. You should also buy organic and choose local produce that’s in season, when you can.

Check out our fruit skewers recipe on page 15.
3 Questions
Lisa Angst of WHA Member Services answers your WHA-related questions

Does WHA have a new mobile app?
Yes, the MyWHA app gives you instant access to your WHA member ID card, driving directions to your doctor’s office and details about your health plan. Additional features will be added in future releases. Download the new MyWHA app from iTunes or Google Play.

My dependent is assigned to a pediatrician and will be turning 18 soon; what should I do?
For pediatric patients, the transition from a pediatrician to a family practice/ internal medicine physician generally takes place between the ages of 19 and 26 years old. However, chronic conditions may justify that patients continue their relationship and health care services with their pediatricians. WHA encourages dependents to change from pediatric care to adult care when medically appropriate. Please talk to your doctor. This decision should be based on individual health care needs. Your dependent can stay in the same medical group; members can make a PCP change via their MyWHA account or by calling our Member Services team.

If my employer is a small group and offers adult dental benefits, how does my child get covered as an adult when she or he is no longer covered under pediatric dental?
If you are enrolled in adult dental coverage provided through your employer, the transition for your child when she or he turns 19 will be seamless. Your child will start with adult dental benefits on the first of the month following his/her 19th birthday.

HOT TICKET
HOT TICKET

WHA Sponsors Free Admission to the Crocker Art Museum
On the third Sunday of each month you can visit the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento for free, thanks to WHA! WHA is the lead sponsor of the Crocker’s “Pay What You Wish” Sunday program. General admission for an adult is usually $10.

In 2017, the Crocker has 15 free or donation-requested days, including every third Sunday of the month, plus the museum’s Day of Remembrance, which was on Feb. 19; Teen Takeover on May 13; and Noon Year’s Eve on Dec. 31.

Museum hours are 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Tues.–Sun. and 10 a.m.–9 p.m. Thurs. The Crocker is closed Mondays, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s Day.
Hope to see you at the museum soon!

DID YOU KNOW?
Engagement with art in a social environment can help people manage their chronic pain. Working with the Integrative Pain Management Program within the Center for Pain Medicine at UC Davis, the Crocker Art Museum offers “Art Rx,” a free program for people who live with chronic pain, and their family members. To learn more, visit crockerart.org/artrx, or call 916.808.7000.
On the Pulse

Tone Up With Dr. Tanji
Get a core message from Dr. Jeffrey Tanji, associate director, Sports Medicine Program, UC Davis Health

If you’ve spent time exercising, you’ve probably heard about the “core” and may have wondered what it is and why you should care.

The core refers to the central muscles of the body that stabilize and balance it with all movement. These include muscles in the abdomen, the back and even extending to the shoulder blades, but also the hamstrings, the quadriceps, the gluteals and the groin or adductors. These are the muscles that engage during central movement and balance unlike, say, the muscles of the arms and legs alone.

Recent concepts in physical therapy and exercise physiology recognize the importance of the core for any kind of human movement. When the core is healthy, you can recover from injury more quickly. When the core is damaged, even improving the limbs may not solve the problem. In this way, the core is important to health because it is at the center of movement.

Muscles of the core also play a very important role in injury prevention and optimal sports performance. Why? Flexibility and balance in the core translates to efficient movement and coordination of strength from the ground up through the body. While cardio training is important to stamina, core training is essential for optimal strength and coordination.

In certain disciplines that require optimal balance and coordination—such as dance, gymnastics and martial arts—the core is essential. Pilates is an excellent example of a foundational core training. I am a fan of Pilates because it is a very safe kind of exercise, but I admit it can take a long time to understand and practice it.

Exercises that risk injury to the spine and back—such as high-impact sports—also risk injuring the core. (Much of spine injury rehabilitation, by the way, is core training.) Collision sports such as hockey, football and rugby are examples of activity that risks the core.

Talk to an expert before embarking on any exercise program to be sure it’s right for you.
Many people take the time to update their status on social media sites, but how many are updating their health status?

When it comes to taking charge of your health, one of the most important things you can do is to schedule annual checkups and screenings. These appointments help your doctor learn about your health risks and overall health.

When you are covered by Western Health Advantage, you can rest assured that all of your preventive care services such as annual physical examinations, immunizations and recommended health screenings are fully covered as part of your health plan. This means WHA members have no out-of-pocket costs for preventive care visits.

For detailed information on your specific plan benefits, you can create a secure account at mywha.org. Once logged in, visit our Healthy Living section for access to gym discounts, health education classes, materials and services to help you find balance and live healthier.

Some of the main indicators of good health that you should know are:
- Blood pressure
- Blood sugar
- Cholesterol
- Body mass index
CULTIVATE A California STATE OF MIND
Awe-inspiring landscapes, farm-fresh food and sunny days are calling. Feed your Golden State spirit with this guide to nearby state parks, native plant gardens, an urban farm and simple meditation.

- GREAT STATE PARKS IN OUR BACKYARD
  Whether you prefer trekking on dusty trails, strolling on urban asphalt or retracing the past, there’s lots to explore in these nearby state parks. Check conditions before you go.

Downtown Sacramento
Take an active lunch break with the California State Parks’ Take a Hike! City Walks program, which encourages locals to get moving out in the community. On April 18, the group will walk to Old Sacramento State Historic Park, home of Gold Rush-era buildings and the California State Railroad Museum, for a round trip of 2.2 miles. The monthly walks take place every third Tuesday, starting at 12:10 p.m. on the west side of the Capitol at 10th Street and Capitol Mall. To sign up for email updates, email dolores.mejia@parks.ca.gov.

  Can’t wait till the next walk? Visit www.parks.ca.gov/takeahike to download a free map featuring 10 walks beginning at the Capitol.

Benicia Capitol State Historic Park
Before Sacramento became our state capital, the Legislature convened in Benicia for a short period (from 1853 to 1854). The restored former statehouse is still standing and open to the public (Thurs.–Sun.; $2–3 entrance fee). For more info or to arrange a tour, call 707.745.3385. At the park, pick up a free Historic Downtown Benicia Walking Tour map and visit 25 sites of historical significance, mostly along First Street. The map is also available for download at protectbeniciastateparks.com.

For a bayside nature walk, head a few miles west to Benicia State Recreation Area. Beginning at the Military West entrance, the paved hike and bike trail spans three-quarters of a mile before joining Dillon Point Road for 1.5 miles. The connecting unpaved, scenic Benicia Bay Trail features gently rolling terrain for 2.2 miles. $6/vehicle. For more info, call 707.648.1911.

Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park (Coloma)
Hike in the area that launched the Gold Rush. The half-mile Marshall Monument trail offers vistas of the Coloma Valley and leads to a statue of James Marshall, who spotted gold at Sutter’s Mill in 1848, overlooking his discovery site. For a more challenging hike with a view, take the 2.3-mile Monroe Ridge Trail.

While you’re here, visit the replica sawmill, pan for gold and take a guided Gold Discovery Tour. $8/vehicle; additional fees for gold panning ($7) and tours ($2–3). For more info, call 530.622.3470.

Mount Tamalpais State Park (Marin County)
For easy scenic hikes and family fun, head to East Peak. On clear days, the wheelchair-accessible, three-quarter-mile Verna Dunshee Trail offers 360-degree views of the Bay Area from a flat, paved trail. East Peak provides access to additional hikes, including the brief Plank Walk Trail; a visitor center; and a gravity car barn dedicated to the history of the former Mount Tamalpais Scenic Railway. $7-8/vehicle.

Friends of Mt. Tam leads hikes on Saturday and Sunday mornings, Wednesday evenings, and Full Moon Hikes on select Saturday evenings. To view the schedule and download trail guides, visit friendsofmttam.org/hiking.html.
Earth Night Festival and Fundraiser  
(fee)  
April 22  
Connolly Ranch  
connollyranch.org/earth-night  

PLACER COUNTY  
Tahoe Truckee Earth Day Festival  
April 22, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.  
The Village at Squaw Valley  
tahoetruckeeearthday.com  

Celebrate the Earth Festival  
April 22, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.  
Mahany Regional Park, Roseville  
roseville.ca.us/earthday  

SOLANO COUNTY  
Earth Day 2017 Celebration  
April 15, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.  
Vallejo Farmer’s Market  
valcorerecycling.org/earthday  

SONOMA COUNTY  
8th Annual Earth Day Festival  
Downtown  
April 22, noon–4 p.m.  
Downtown Santa Rosa  
srcity.org/earthday  

YOLO COUNTY  
West Sacramento Earth Day Celebration  
April 23, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.  
West Sacramento City Hall  
westsacrecycles.org  

Whole Earth Festival  
May 12–14  
UC Davis Quad  
wef.ucdavis.edu  

STATEWIDE  
Earth Day Restoration and Cleanup at California State Parks  
On April 22, join the California State Parks Foundation and thousands of volunteers across the state in assisting with habitat restoration, native garden conservation, fence building, trail maintenance, beach cleanup and more.  
To find a volunteer opportunity at a nearby state park, visit calparks.org/help/earth-day.

• GLOBAL CELEBRATIONS

GO LOCAL
Celebrate Earth Day in your community with family-friendly entertainment, local food, conservation-oriented exhibits and more

SACRAMENTO COUNTY  
Sacramento Earth Day  
April 23, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.  
Southside Park  
ecosalmento.net  

Earth Fest at Sacramento Zoo  
(included with zoo admission)  
April 22, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.  
saczoo.org/earthfest  

EL DORADO COUNTY  
Placerville Earth Day  
April 22, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.  
Placerville Library  
placervilleearthday.wordpress.com  

South Tahoe Earth Day  
April 29, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.  
Bijou Community Park  
southtahoeearthday.org  

NAPA COUNTY  
Earth Day, presented by Environmental Education Coalition of Napa County  
April 22, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.  
Oxbow Commons, Napa  
napaenvironmentaled.org/earth-day

• FROM FARM TO FORK

Learn how food, health and the environment intersect at Soil Born Farms

Do you ever think about where your food comes from?

Soil Born Farms, which grows organic produce at the 55-acre historic American River Ranch in Rancho Cordova, aims to help us reconnect with our food and the land. “We have such a rich agricultural history here in Sacramento,” says Janet Zeller, Soil Born Farms founder and co-director. “Our mission is to [empower] youth and adults to discover and participate in a local food system that encourages healthy living, nurtures the environment and grows a sustainable community.”

Get a taste of what this nonprofit farm is all about on May 21 at A Day...
on the Farm, featuring farm-to-fork refreshments, free cooking and gardening classes, children’s activities, an organic plant sale, music, and more (10 a.m.–3 p.m.; $5). This community event kicks off the opening of the seasonal American River Ranch Farmstand (open Saturdays 8 a.m.–12:30 p.m. through November). This event is co-sponsored by WHA, which is also a “sustaining partner” of Soil Born Farms and supports the organization in multiple ways.

Other Soil Born programs include:
• Cooking, gardening, herb and backyard beekeeping classes
• Guided Bird Walks ($8) and Herb Walks ($25)
• Summer Day Camp

To learn more or to register for programs, visit soilborn.org.

- ZEN MOMENTS
  WITH MEDITATION

Take a blissful breather from stress

Despite our state’s reputation for laid-back living, daily life here is often faster-paced than a day at the beach. With practice, you can relax almost anywhere with meditation, which can be as simple as finding a comfy, quiet spot and focusing on your breath.

Once you’re seated (or standing or walking), tune in to the flow of your breath. Allow thoughts to come and go, but redirect your attention to breathing. It might help to count each breath in or out. Another technique involves breathing mindfully while imagining yourself in a serene setting—perhaps in a shady (state) park or a tranquil (native plant) garden.

When learning, consistency matters. Try to meditate at least 10 minutes at the same time every day.

Sources: American Heart Association, Harvard Health Publications

- CALIFORNIA
  BLOOMIN’

These mostly native plant gardens and activities offer inspiration for incorporating drought-tolerant plants into your own garden

California Native Plant Demonstration Garden at Sacramento Historic City Cemetery

Come for the plants—the garden displays more than 150 native species—and stay for a guided or self-guided tour of Sacramento’s oldest existing cemetery, the resting place of notable California pioneers.

Looking for hands-on experience? The Sacramento Valley Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), which maintains the garden, offers a variety of activities:
• Sunday volunteer shifts: email cnpsgarden@gmail.com to sign up

Volunteering at Elderberry Farms Native Plant Nursery and Demonstration Garden at Soil Born Farms (Wednesdays and third Saturdays): RSVP to cnpschris@gmail.com

Friday Walks featuring seed and data collecting, plant identification, nature watching, and more

For details, visit sacvalleycnps.org.

Häagen-Dazs Honey Bee Haven at UC Davis

Learn how to create a garden sanctuary for bees, which play a vital role in our food supply—and healthy diets—through pollination. The haven has a native plant area, with additional native plants scattered throughout. To ensure safety, wear closed-toe, closed-heel shoes and remain on pathways. Consider walking or cycling around 2 miles to the haven from central campus.

For directions and hours, visit hhbhgarden.ucdavis.edu.

Marin California Native Plant Society
Join the Marin chapter on a free hiking field trip dedicated to observing native plants in the field. For details, visit cnpsmarin.org/events/field-trips.

To find a CNPS chapter near you, visit cnps.org.
The Female Side of Heart Health

Find out what you know—and need to learn—about ways women can live a heart-healthy lifestyle
Despite misconceptions that it is a “man’s disease,” heart disease is the No. 1 cause of death for women in the United States—equating one in four fatalities each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Yet just over half of women see it as a top health threat. Initiatives like the American Heart Association’s Go Red for Women and other public health campaigns aim to increase awareness about risk factors, preventive measures and heart attack warning signs.

Test your own heart health knowledge with the following quiz.

**True or False**

For women, smoking and using birth control pills increases the risk of heart disease by 20 percent.

True. Researchers have found a link between oral contraceptives and increased blood pressure in some women, particularly those who are overweight or have kidney disease or a family history of high blood pressure. The FDA recommends that women with a history of blood clots, heart attack or stroke avoid combination birth control pills (oral contraceptives that contain estrogen and a progestin). Taking these types of birth control pills and smoking is dangerous, especially for women over 35 as it can increase risk of cardiovascular disease. Experts at the Mayo Clinic suggest quitting smoking before starting oral contraceptives. Make sure to consult your doctor about the best form of birth control for you.

**True or False**

Women and men experience the same recovery outcomes following a heart attack.

False. Researchers have found that women 55 or younger are more likely to have poor mental function, lower quality of life, higher levels of chest pain and more physical limitations the year after a heart attack than their male counterparts.

**A “silent heart attack” is:**

a. A cardiac episode that causes deafness.
b. When someone is embarrassed and doesn’t tell anyone he or she suffered a heart attack.
c. A heart attack with unrecognized or no symptoms that occurs when blood flow in the coronary arteries is blocked.
d. A silent heart attack can occur while the sufferer is unaware it is happening, feeling nothing at all or ascribing minimal symptoms to another condition. Medically known as silent ischemia, the event can result in damage to the heart. One recent study of nearly 9,500 middle-aged adults found that silent heart attacks were more common in men but were more likely to cause death in women.

**True or False**

Ninety percent of women have one or more risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

True. While women share many of the same traditional risk factors as men (such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure and obesity), other conditions such as diabetes, depression, smoking and even menopause play a bigger role in women developing cardiovascular disease.

Sources: American Heart Association, Food and Drug Administration, Mayo Clinic, CDC
AFTER-HOURS CARE
Where to go if you have a health issue when the doctor’s office is closed

Health problems don’t occur at our convenience. You may experience an issue late at night or on the weekend. Even though your doctor’s office might be closed, you should still reach out. Your doctor or the doctor on call may schedule an appointment or authorize you to go to an urgent care or emergency facility. You can also call Nurse24 day or night (at 877.793.3655) for home treatments or directions to an urgent care or emergency facility.

Head to an urgent care facility if you have a non-emergency condition like the flu, cold or sore throat. Please note that some medical groups require prior authorization to visit an urgent care center.

If you have a medical emergency such as a heart attack, stroke, serious injury, severe pain or a condition that is quickly worsening, go to the closest emergency room. Call 911 if you feel your health or that of a loved one is in serious danger.

Get your follow-up care and any additional treatment from your doctor. Non-emergency follow-up care received at an urgent care or emergency facility or out-of-network hospital is not covered by your health plan.

To learn more about emergency, urgent and after-hours care, visit mywha.org/er.

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May is Stroke Awareness Month

Every 40 seconds, someone has a stroke in the U.S., but 80 percent of all strokes are preventable. If you’re like most Americans, you may not know the signs of stroke. May is American Stroke Month, and the American Heart Association is asking everyone to learn how to spot a stroke. F.A.S.T.: FACE drooping; ARM weakness; SPEECH difficulty; TIME to call 911. Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in America and a leading cause of long-term disability. Teaching people how to recognize a stroke and respond quickly can help us reduce the impact of this deadly disease. Every second counts during a stroke. Even a small delay can mean the difference between recovery and disability, life and death.

June 1–7 is National CPR and AED Awareness Week

CPR Week is June 1–7 and helps raise awareness annually about the importance of learning this lifesaving skill. According to the American Heart Association, 90 percent of people who suffer out-of-hospital cardiac arrests die. CPR, especially if performed immediately, can double or triple a person’s chance of survival. Take one minute of your day to learn the lifesaving skills of Hands-Only™ CPR at heart.org/handsonlycpr. Hands-Only CPR has been shown to be as effective as conventional CPR for cardiac arrest.

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Be Health-Aware!

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Sometimes we get so caught up in the day-to-day minutiae of our tasks, we lose sight of the “big picture.” In my business, people dive into the nuts and bolts of investing, but they sometimes ignore the reason for those investments—to retire successfully one day.

Forty years ago retirement looked something like this: You retired at 65 with a pension and Social Security (which was fully funded). Your health care was completely taken care of. Maybe you took three cruises and figured you wouldn’t make it past age 72.

Today it’s completely different. Private companies have gotten rid of pensions altogether. In my opinion, the public sector will eventually be forced to move to a hybrid system. Social Security is still paying but will eventually run out of money. Most importantly, we are all living longer! A healthy couple age 65 has a 50-50 chance that one of them will see the age of 90.

In a nutshell, the task of retirement planning has been off-loaded by our government and business community … to the individual.

Are you ready to assume this responsibility?

There are a lot of tools designed to help you plan for retirement. You can find websites and apps that will help you budget, invest and view possible income streams upon retirement. Alternatively, advisers can help you with this process.

The bottom line: Spend less time on investments and more time understanding how your savings will need to be stretched to fund your retirement.

**WHA Releases New Mobile App**

**WHA IS THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE THE RELEASE OF OUR NEW MOBILE APPLICATION, MYWHA**

By utilizing cutting-edge technology, the MyWHA app allows you to securely and seamlessly access your health information from your smartphone. This technology delivers true, any-time access to your health plan. One email address and password gives you entry to your personalized MyWHA account, regardless of the device.

**Key features:**

- Email or fax electronic copies of IDs for you and your family
- Quickly find out how to reach your PCP and get a map to his/her office
- Look up details about your plan, such as your copayment or your pharmacy plan
- Contact the Western Health Advantage Member Services Department
- Contact 24-hour nurse advice line and your PCP

**Download the MyWHA app from iTunes or Google Play.** Stay tuned for additional feature releases.

**BIG PICTURE**

Kelly Brothers on thinking forward to your future retirement

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Health plans in California must ensure that members have timely access to their doctors and other providers when seeking care. This means that there are limits on how long you have to wait to get an appointment and telephone advice. The wait times are shown in the chart below. Some exceptions to the wait times apply. Members who have questions or believe they need to be seen sooner should contact either their provider’s office or WHA’s Member Services Department for assistance.

**WAIT TIMES FOR APPOINTMENTS AND TELEPHONE ADVICE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appointment Type</th>
<th>General Time Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency care</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent care – no prior authorization required</td>
<td>48 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent care – prior authorization required</td>
<td>72 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-urgent primary care doctor visit</td>
<td>10 business days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-urgent specialist visit</td>
<td>15 business days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-urgent ancillary visit; for example, behavioral health, physical therapy, X-rays, etc.</td>
<td>15 business days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone triage and advice*</td>
<td>No greater than 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*You can access WHA’s Nurse24 Advice Line 24/7 online or at 877.793.3655.

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**Create a MyWHA Account**

WHA offers you personalized online resources for managing your health plan with the convenience of any-time access. Learn how your health plan coverage, benefits and services work. Check out the Healthy Living section for resources to help you live a healthier lifestyle.

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**To create your secure MyWHA account:**

- Go to mywha.org/signup.
- Follow the prompts. You will need your 11-digit WHA member ID number as well as some basic info.
FRUIT SKEWERS WITH YOGURT DIP
This healthy snack will delight everyone in the family.

INGREDIENTS
2 cups strawberries, rinsed, stems removed and cut in half
1 cup pineapple, diced
½ cup blackberries
1 tangerine or clementine, peeled and cut into 8 segments
8 6-inch wooden skewers
¼ cup fat-free plain yogurt
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
1 tablespoon honey

DIRECTIONS
Thread two strawberry halves, two pineapple chunks, two blackberries and one tangerine segment on each skewer. For the dip, puree remaining strawberries. Add yogurt, vanilla and honey, and mix well. Serve two skewers with dip on the side.

NUTRITION INFORMATION
Calories: 71
Carbohydrates: 18 g
Protein: 1 g
Total fiber: 2 g
Potassium: 174 mg
Sodium: 10 mg

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
On-the-go access with MyWHA.

With cutting-edge technology, the MyWHA app will allow you to securely and seamlessly access your health benefit information from your smartphone. This technology delivers true any-time access to your health plan, using the same account as for your online MyWHA account. One email address and password, limitless devices!

The new MyWHA app will provide instant access to:

- Your WHA member ID card
- Driving directions to your doctor’s office
- Details about your health plan benefits
- And more features to come

Learn more about WHA's digital resources | mywha.org/apps