Are You In The Fast Lane?

Is your internal motor running faster than the world around you? In our fast-paced, “I want it done yesterday” world, you may feel like a car barreling out of control down a narrow mountain highway. What is all this tension and rushing for? For many, it is working to have the first heart attack, divorce and counseling for the kids.

The danger of “I’m always feeling tense and rushed” is that it is so common and becomes so familiar that you barely recognize how burnt out you are. You try resting, but your mind still races with things to do. You take a day off from work and spend the entire time catching up on errands and chores.

Check these guidelines for doing less to accomplish more.

**Most time pressures are self-imposed.** Go through the list of demands on you and eliminate those you have needlessly created for yourself. Ask yourself the basic question: Do I really have to do this?

**Stop taking pride in how much you overwork.** Ask yourself throughout the day whether what you are doing is your biggest priority or just more “busy-ness.”

**Take satisfaction in saying, “no”.** Sooner or later we will have to learn limits. We must choose what really matters to us, or else outside demands will shape our lives.

**Remember that failure is a part of success.** Some people feel tense and rushed because they are tyrannically driven by a fear of failure. Yet, the very best hitter only gets three hits out of every ten times at bat. To succeed, one must know how to fail.

*Source: CCE Cayuga County*
Answer Corner

For regular felt-tip markers (those that aren’t labeled “permanent”), rinse the stain with cold water until no more color is being removed. Then place the stain face down on some clean paper towels and sponge with rubbing alcohol. Apply the alcohol first to the clean area around the stain and then directly to the stain. Replace the paper towels as often as needed. Launder using the hottest water that’s safe for the fabric.

When it comes to washability, not all markers are alike. In addition to permanent markers with ink that doesn’t come out, no matter what you do, there are water-based markers that use watersoluble inks. They are generally nontoxic, but not necessarily washable. When purchasing markers for children’s use, read the marker package instructions carefully so you are sure to select ones that specifically feature washability.

Craft Project Cleanup

To remove water-based craft glue, scrape off the excess glue. If the glue has hardened, you may need to soften it before you scrape it off. Fold some paper towels into a 1/8”-thick stack. Saturate with warm water and then place the stack on top of the glue stain. Leave the paper towels in place for about an hour until the glue softens. Once you’ve scraped off the glue, pretreat the stain with a prewash stain remover and launder, using the hottest water that’s safe for the fabric.

Source: American Cleaning Institute for Better Living, Cleaning Matters newsletter, Jan/Feb 2012

How to Tell if Your Freezer Was Off When You Were Away

A gentleman had been traveling during a time when the electricity was off for several days in many homes in his community. However, when he returned home, his electricity was working and everything in his freezer was frozen solid.

He proceeded to eat some foods from the freezer and got sick. What happened?

In this case, his electricity had been off for about a week, and then came back on. Everything in his freezer had thawed and been at unsafe temperatures for several days. As the food froze again when the electricity returned, he was unaware there were any food safety problems.

Here’s a simple way to help detect this problem. Store an ice cube or two in a sealed plastic bag or small container in the freezer; a sealed bag/container is important so the ice cube doesn’t evaporate and disappear. If the ice cube has melted down from its original shape, you’ll know the power was off for an extended period of time.

For information on handling your food during a power outage, visit the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service Emergency Preparedness page at: www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/keeping_food_Safe_during_an_emergency/index.asp
NEW “HERKIMER COUNTY LIVING” SCHEDULE

Note that you are receiving the first issue of Herkimer County Living for 2012. The new schedule for the 6 issues will be: February/March, April/May, June/July, August/September, October/November, December 2012/January 2013.

“HOLIDAY BOOK TREE” THANKS

We would like to extend a heartfelt “thank you” to all who donated books to our Holiday Book Tree benefiting the Even Start Family Literacy Program. Over 1500 books were collected and will be put to good use.

“EAT SMART NY” PROGRAM AVAILABLE

Nutrition staff are available to help limited income families and individuals throughout Herkimer County stretch their food dollars to feed themselves and their families better for less.

Lessons can take place in participants homes or worksites as well as at community centers. Groups can be formed with neighbors, families, and friends.

Topics include:

- Stretching food dollars
- Preparing low cost, easy recipes and menus
- Eating healthy and staying active

Nutrition staff personalize activities to help families take control of their food bill; prepare quick and easy meals; and stay active.

Who can participate? Families who have applied for or are receiving Food Stamps, as well as those participating in WIC, Head Start or receiving Medicaid.

Here’s what graduates say:

✓ “I couldn’t believe how much money I saved at the grocery store once I learned how to use unit pricing. This program is great”
✓ “I couldn’t believe how many calories and fat were in my fast food meal! Now I can make healthier choices when eating out.”
✓ “I learned how to make quick, nutritious meals that my family loved. It gave me more time to spend with my kids!”
✓ “With what I learned, I can now set a good example for my daughter by eating healthier and staying active.”

For more information, please call Cornell Cooperative Extension at (315) 866-7920 X 223 or stop by our offices in East Herkimer at 5657 State Route 5. You can also access more information about the program at: http://blogs.cce.cornell.edu/herkimer/2009/04/01/human-ecology/
SWEET POTATO HUMMUS

1 pound sweet potatoes or yams, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces (approximately 3 cups)
1 can (19.5 ounces) chickpeas (or garbanzo beans), drained and rinsed
1/4 cup lemon juice (fresh or concentrate)
1/4 cup peanut butter (Tahini or sesame paste can be substituted for peanut butter, but will yield a slightly different taste.)
1-1/2 tablespoons olive oil
1-1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
Salt and pepper to taste
Paprika or parsley for garnish
Whole wheat pita or sliced vegetables

In a large pot, bring 1 quart of water to a boil; add potatoes; reduce to simmer, cover and cook until tender, 10 to 12 minutes.

Reserve 1 cup of water and drain the rest of the water from the potatoes. Cool the potatoes slightly and transfer them to a food processor.

Combine chickpeas, lemon juice, peanut butter, oil, cumin, and garlic in the food processor. Puree, about 1 minute; thin with reserved water if necessary. The consistency should be thick but spreadable.

Season with salt and pepper if desired and let cool. Refrigerate in an airtight container, up to 1 week.

Serving Ideas:
• Garnish with paprika or sprigs of parsley as desired.
• Serve with pita wedges (toasted or not) or sliced fresh vegetables of choice. Crudités* like sweet peppers, cucumbers, carrots, broccoli, or sugar pod peas are popular choices.
• This also makes a great spread for sandwiches or wraps.

Getting kids cooking:
• Have some fun with children by learning about the word “crudités” and how to pronounce it.
• Kids can help mix the ingredients together.
• Younger children can help push the buttons on the food processor, and older children can help chop the vegetables.

Source: Eat Right Montana, December 2011

*Crudités are traditional French appetizers comprising sliced or whole raw vegetables which are sometimes dipped in a vinaigrette or other dipping sauce. Crudités often include celery sticks, carrot sticks, bell pepper strips, broccoli, cauliflower, and asparagus spears; sometimes olives depending on local customs.

The French word "crudité", which designates uncooked vegetables, originates in much the same way as the English word "crude," from Latin. The Latin word "crūdus" simply means raw. Later, it was refined to "crūditās", which means "undigested food" and then on to "crudité" in French.
Putting FUN Into Family Fitness

Everyone agrees on these few fitness facts:

★ American families - both kids and adults - are not getting the physical activity they need.
★ Being fit helps you stay healthy and perform better at school and work.
★ Short 10-minute ‘sparks’ of activity can be just as good for you and more enjoyable than longer bouts of ‘exercise.’

Make a resolution to have some active family FUN every day and reap the benefits for every body from granddad to the dog!

PLAN

Make a family list: For those “I’m BORED” moments, write down ALL the FUN ways that your family likes to play and post the list where you can easily find it.

Get equipped: Make a couple of FUN baskets or bins - balls, jump ropes, rackets, Frisbees®, and other active toys. Keep them in plain sight, ready for playtime anytime.

Put FUN on the calendar: With today’s busy schedules, it can sometimes feel like there is “no time.” So, you just have to make time by putting it on everyone’s calendar.

PLAY

When you think like a child, activity can become an everyday part of your family’s FUN lifestyle. Be spontaneous and look for ways to just “move it” throughout the day:

1. Toss a toy: Nerf® balls and stuffed animals are great for a quick game of catch.

2. Play a game: Any active game works: hopscotch, Simon Says, or even tag!

3. Bounce a ball: At home or the park, football, basketball, softball, ANY ball.

4. Move to music: It can be real dancing or just old fashioned jumping around.

5. Run a dog around: Furry pets need activity as much as their human families.

6. Fly a kite: All you need is some wind, open space, string, and an inexpensive kite.

7. Hunt for treasure: Hide-n-seek is great with people, eggs, or almost anything!

8. Go for a picnic: Walking or hiking is much more FUN with a meal at the end.

9. Chase a dream: Catching bugs is FUN and so is taking photos of clouds.

10. Share special time: Kids love to do ANY activity with adults who care.

ENJOY

A family that plays together can have a ton of FUN. Active play is always a win-win-win for children’s (and parents’) physical, mental, and emotional health!

Source: Eat Right Montana
December 2011
The 150th Anniversary of USDA

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack visited the Old Illinois State Capitol to announce the year-long celebration of United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) 150th anniversary in 2012. Secretary Vilsack was in the hometown of USDA's founder – President Abraham Lincoln - who signed into law an act of Congress establishing the United States Department of Agriculture in 1862.

"Through our work on food, agriculture, economic development, science, natural resource conservation and a host of issues, USDA still fulfills President Lincoln’s vision as "The People's Department"—touching the lives of every American, every day," said Vilsack. "As we commemorate 150 years, we will look for lessons from the past that can help us strengthen USDA in the future to address the changing needs of agriculture and rural America."

President Lincoln established USDA because he recognized the potential of America's farmers to find new ways to cultivate the land and that with advances in research and technology, America's farmers and ranchers could provide a safe, ample food supply for our nation and the world. In one of President Lincoln's only speeches on agriculture at the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society on September 30, 1859, he said, "...no other human occupation opens so wide a field for the profitable and agreeable combination of labor with cultivated thought, as agriculture."

Today, America's farmers and ranchers are responsible in no small way for the health and strength of this nation. In February 2012, at USDA's Annual Agricultural Outlook Forum, the Department will formally launch the 150th anniversary commemoration.

Throughout 2012, USDA will recognize important events, such as President Lincoln's signing of an Act to establish the Department of Agriculture on May 15, 1862, and the July signing of the Morrill Act to establish public land grant universities. Learn more about President Lincoln's agricultural legacy at http://www.nal.usda.gov/history-art-and-biography/biography/abraham-lincoln-and-agriculture

USDA created a special web page at www.usda.gov/usda150. The site gives the American people a sense of where USDA has been – and where USDA is headed in the 21st century. This web page will provide information about events, facts and goings-on related to the anniversary.

Source: USDA News Release, November 2, 2011
**CHOOSEMYPLATE “SUPERTRACKER”**

SuperTracker is now available from the ChooseMyPlate.gov website (www.choosemyplate.gov/SuperTracker)

The USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) has developed a new online diet and physical activity planning, assessment, and analysis tool.

SuperTracker is designed to help Americans implement the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. With this tool, users can do everything from a quick food look up to in-depth diet and activity tracking and analysis over time and weight management.

This tool offers consumers the ability to:

- personalize recommendations for what and how much to eat and amount of physical activity
- track foods and physical activity from an expanded database of foods and physical activities
- customize features such as goal setting, virtual coaching, weight tracking and journaling
- measure progress with comprehensive reports ranging from a simple meal summary to in-depth analysis of food groups and nutrient intake over time

“SuperTracker” is available at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov or can be directly accessed at https://www.choosemyplate.gov/SuperTracker/default.aspx

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**NATIONAL POISON PREVENTION WEEK**

In 1962, West Side Story won the Oscar® for Best Picture; John Glenn was the first American to orbit the earth; the Rolling Stones made their singing debut in London; Johnny Carson took over as permanent host of The Tonight Show; and the Beatles released “Love Me Do,” their first single for EMI.

It was also the year that Congress passed a law to authorize the President to designate annually the third week in March as National Poison Prevention Week. President John F. Kennedy signed this act into law, after which the Poison Prevention Week Council, whose membership includes the American Cleaning Institute®, was formed to coordinate this annual event.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of National Poison Prevention Week. This week is observed March 18-24, 2012

For more information, contact the Upstate NY Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 or www.upstatepoison.org.
Clothing Care Labels May Now Use Symbols Instead of Words

A recent change in the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) Care Labeling Rule means that consumers may soon find a new "language" on those care labels. The symbols were developed by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), using a system that is simple and easy to learn.

To make the learning process even easier, the American Cleaning Institute has developed the following resources:

(continued on page 9)
### Your Guide to Fabric Care Symbols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Machine Wash</th>
<th>Bleach</th>
<th>Tumble Dry</th>
<th>Dry</th>
<th>Iron</th>
<th>Dry Clean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temperature</strong></td>
<td><strong>Heat Setting</strong></td>
<td><strong>(Dry or Steam)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Temperature</strong></td>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool/Cold</td>
<td>Any Bleach (when needed)</td>
<td>No Heat</td>
<td>Line Dry/Hang to Dry</td>
<td>Dry Clean</td>
<td>Do Not Wash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm</td>
<td>Only Non-chlorine Bleach (when needed)</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Drip Dry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot</td>
<td>Do Not Bleach</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Dry in the Shade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Any Heat</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Dry Flat</td>
<td>No Steam</td>
<td>Do Not Iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Press</td>
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<td>Delicate/Gentle</td>
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<td>Do Not Wrinng</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hand Wash</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Courtesy of: American Cleaning Institute℠*

Developed in cooperation with the Federal Trade Commission.

Visit our web site! [http://www.cleaninginstitute.org](http://www.cleaninginstitute.org)

info@cleaninginstitute.org
DON'T BE FOOLLED BY HEALTH FRAUD SCAMS

The science of public health was still in its infancy in the 19th and early 20th centuries when early incarnations of the modern Food and Drug Administration (FDA) tried to protect consumers from “snake oil salesmen” and other shifty characters who swindled the sick and gullible.

Back then the agency was known as the Division, and later the Bureau of Chemistry. Its agents pursued the traveling con men who sold tonics and elixirs—such as “miracle oil” supposedly made from snakes—with promises to cure whatever ails you. Labels did not list ingredients and unsuspecting buyers only found out through bitter experience that they were at best ineffective and at worse deadly.

FDA is still on the case—more than a century later. The agency has created a new Internet resource to help consumers recognize and protect themselves from the 21st century versions of these bogus health products.

FDA’s Health Fraud Scams website (www.fda.gov/healthfraud) pulls together videos and articles on how to avoid fraudulent schemes, and offers information about products that have been seized, recalled or are the subject of warnings from the agency.

The site also provides links to government resources on health fraud involving FDA-regulated products, such as drugs, dietary supplements, tobacco products, alternative medicines, medical devices, and cosmetics.

Gary Coody, R.Ph., national health fraud coordinator at FDA, calls the site “one-stop shopping” for people who want to learn how to recognize and avoid health fraud scams. Anyone can search the site to see if FDA has taken an action against a product or company. However, just because a product is not listed does not mean that it is legally marketed or safe to use.

Equal Opportunity Fraud

Consumers spend a fortune on products that “are either worthless or may cause harm,” says Coody. “Consumers can buy very dangerous products on the Internet and in stores that can cause serious injury or death.”

The waste of money is bad enough but using one of these unproven treatments can delay getting a potentially life-saving diagnosis and medication that works, he says.

The schemes can take many forms. “Some products billed as “all natural” in fact have prescription drugs and other chemicals not listed on the label that could be dangerous,” Coody says. The most common categories of these tainted products include weight loss, sexual performance, and bodybuilding.

(continued on page 11)
Don’t Be Fooled by Health Fraud Scams...continued from page 10

Other products claim to be a cure-all for such serious chronic diseases as cancer, arthritis, diabetes, Alzheimer’s disease and multiple sclerosis. Seniors are particularly vulnerable to this kind of deception but consumers of all ages are taken in by fraudulent products, says Coody, adding, “Everyone is vulnerable.”

With every new health threat, phony products appear overnight, Coody says. For example, after the Japan nuclear incident in March, 2011, he says the market was flooded with products that falsely claimed to offer protection from harmful radiation.

Back to FDA’s Roots

Rampant health fraud was a significant reason for the passage of the 1906 Food and Drugs Act, says FDA historian John P. Swann, Ph.D. “So-called ‘patent’ medicines, with their outrageous claims and unlabeled, often harmful ingredients had been a mainstay of the American medical landscape throughout the 19th century (and before),” he says.

“Examples abound, from alleged rapid cures for serious diseases like cancer, tuberculosis and syphilis, to remedies with harmful and dangerous ingredients, such as addiction cures that included the unlabeled ingredient that was the source of the addiction,” says Swann. “There were also soothing syrups for colicky and teething babes that included alcohol and opiates.”

The 1906 law prohibited the marketing of adulterated and misbranded drugs, and required labeling of a few ingredients, including alcohol, opium, morphine, heroin, and cocaine.

More than 30 years later, the 1938 Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act gave FDA (named the Food and Drug Administration in 1931) new power to regulate medical devices. The agency was then able to act against the “countless gadgets that could deflect the attention of consumers from seeking established therapies,” Swann says.

The Difference Today

Health fraud is more pervasive today, says Coody, because “the Internet has opened up the world market to people from their personal computers.” If you’re tempted to purchase any unproven or little known treatment, especially if it’s sold on the Internet, check with your doctor or health care professional first, he advises.

But shady products are also peddled by TV infomercials, radio, direct mail, word-of-mouth marketing and ads in newspapers and magazines. “There are many ways that consumers are getting these messages,” says Coody, and they should view these ads with a healthy dose of skepticism.”

Source: FDA U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Consumer Updates, November 9, 2011
The theme for March 2012 is "Get Your Plate in Shape."

National Nutrition Month® is a nutrition education and information campaign created annually in March by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (formally the American Dietetic Association). The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. The key messages are featured in the "Get Your Plate in Shape" Nutrition Tip Sheet.

Before you eat, think about what goes on your plate or in your bowl. Foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products and lean protein foods contain the nutrients you need without too many calories. Over the day, include foods from all the food groups. Try the following tips to “Get Your Plate in Shape.”

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.

Eat a variety of vegetables, especially dark-green, red and orange vegetables plus beans and peas. Fresh, frozen and canned vegetables all count. Choose “reduced sodium” or “no-salt-added” canned vegetables.

Add fruit to meals and snacks. Buy fruits that are dried, frozen or canned in water or 100% juice, as well as fresh fruits.

Make at least half your grains whole.

Choose 100% whole-grain breads, cereals, crackers, pasta and brown rice.

Check the ingredients list on food packages to find whole-grain foods.

Switch to fat-free or low-fat milk.

Fat-free and low-fat milk have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories.

If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free milk or a calcium-fortified soy beverage.

Vary your protein choices.

Eat a variety of foods from the protein food group each week, such as seafood, nuts and beans, as well as lean meat, poultry and eggs.

Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.

Keep meat and poultry portions small and lean.

Cut back on sodium and empty calories from solid fats and added sugars.

Drink water instead of sugary drinks. Select fruit for dessert. Eat sugary desserts less often. Choose 100% fruit juice instead of fruit-flavored drinks.

Look out for salt (sodium) in foods you buy. Compare sodium in foods and choose those with lower numbers. Add spices or herbs to season food without adding salt.

Make major sources of saturated fats such as desserts, pizza, cheese, sausages and hot dogs occasional choices, not every day foods.

Select lean cuts of meat or poultry and fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt and cheese.

Switch from solid fats to oils when preparing food.

(continued on page 13)
Enjoy your food but eat less.


Avoid oversized portions. Use a smaller plate, bowl and glass.

Cook more often at home, where you are in control of what’s in your food

When eating out, choose lower calorie menu options. Choose dishes that include vegetables, fruits and whole grains.

Write down what you eat to keep track of how much you eat.

If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so sensibly. Limit to 1 drink a day for women or to 2 drinks a day for men.

Be physically active your way.

Pick activities that you like and start by doing what you can, at least 10 minutes at a time. Every bit adds up and health benefits increase as you spend more time being active.

Children and teens: Get 60 minutes or more a day.

Adults: Get 2 hours and 30 minutes or more a week of activity that requires moderate effort such as brisk walking.

Find more healthy eating tips at:
• www.eatright.org
• www.kidseatright.org
• www.ChooseMyPlate.gov

Don’t Drink Your Calories

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans advise us to limit our consumption of added sugars. After all, almost half of all the added sugars in the average American’s diet come from soda and other sugary drinks. (JADA, 2000). Here are 5 ways to lower your beverage calories:

1. Make better coffee choices. Some beverages pack as many calories as a meal! Watch out for options that are high in fat and sugar

2. Choose whole fruit instead of smoothies or juice. While most blended drinks do contain fruit, they also often include frozen yogurt, sherbet, cream, and/or added sugar, all of which add calories.

3. Limit sodas or choose diet soda. Super-sized or extra-large beverages may be a bargain per ounce, but they are a disaster for your waistline. Did you know that a 'child-sized' soda in a fast food restaurant contains the same amount of liquid as a 12-ounce can?

4. Drink skim milk instead of whole milk. An eight-ounce serving of whole milk contains 160 calories. The same-size serving of skim milk contains just half as many calories!

5. Make the best choices every day. Stock the fridge with grab-and-go bottles of water and low-calorie beverages. Having the right foods and beverages on hand is key to controlling your calories. This helps keep you from making a bad 'on the run' choice when away from home.

For more, see the article beginning on the following page: “Water: The Forgotten Nutrient”
**WATER: THE FORGOTTEN NUTRIENT**

With all the talk about protein, carbohydrates, and fat, it’s easy to forget about the most important nutrient - the one that makes up 55-75 percent of your body weight and plays a role in everything your body does every day. Water plays a starring role in every cell, organ, and system in your body. It makes up all body fluids, acts as a lubricant and protectant, aids in digestion and elimination of waste from the body and it regulates body temperature.

**How much water should I drink daily?**

In general, men need at least 12 cups of fluid daily, while women require at least nine cups. Hydration is important for seniors since they are less active and might not feel thirsty; additionally, getting enough fluids, along with adequate fiber, helps prevent constipation.

**Why so much?**

Your body loses 8-12 cups of water every day and this needs to be replaced. Some factors, which increase your fluid needs even more include: exercise, hot weather, low humidity, high altitude, a high fiber diet and increased fluid losses (from caffeine and alcohol intake).

**What to drink?**

While most of your fluid needs should be met by drinking water, it is available from other beverages, soups and even foods. Skim milk, 100% fruit juice, and decaffeinated teas are mostly water, so go ahead and count them toward your daily goal. Fruits and vegetables also contain a fair amount of water. Since it’s hard to track the amount of water you get from food, it’s best to try for at least 8 cups of fluid daily.

The water in coffee and tea certainly does help keep people hydrated. Only a fool would believe that someone dying of dehydration and thirst would be made worse by drinking coffee and tea. The only drink that might hasten death in a severely dehydrated person would be something very high in salt.

A recent study was the first to show people who drink more coffee are actually less likely to be hospitalized due to cardiac arrhythmia than those who drink no coffee. The main way drinking coffee could be bad for one's health is if it is not paper filtered (which raises bad cholesterol) and/or it is loaded with cream and sugar.

**Bottled or tap?**

For the most part, whether you drink bottled or tap water is a matter of taste. Drink what you like and you will tend to drink more. But keep these facts in mind:

- **Fluoride:** Most municipal tap water is fluoridated. If you rely solely on bottled water, check the label to see if it contains fluoride. If not, discuss fluoride supplementation with your dentist.

- **Sodium:** Municipal tap water is usually relatively low in sodium. Water treated with a home water softener can have higher levels of sodium. A 1998 review of bottled water found that sodium content varied from brand to brand, with lower levels in North American products and higher levels in European products. Check labels to be sure.

*(continued on page 15)*
Healthy Water Habits:

Start the morning off right by drinking a glass of water as soon as you wake up (before coffee!).

- Carry a water bottle wherever you go so you are not tempted to grab sodas and other sugared beverages.
- Switch to sugar-free coffee, tea, or sodas. Caffeine free is also a good idea.
- Order water with lemon at restaurants.
- Drink a glass of water before each meal or snack.
- If you’re at home, keep a half-gallon pitcher of water in the refrigerator.
- Set goals for yourself. For example, one cup of coffee then switch to tea or water. Stick with tea instead of soda.

Tasty Ways to Work with Water:

If you like the tingle of carbonated sodas, try club soda, seltzer, or sparkling water with a splash of fruit juice.

- Dilute fruit juice half and half with water.
- Add slices of lemon, lime, or orange to water.

Beverage Sense

- Alcohol should be used in moderation - the Dietary Guidelines for Americans call for no more than 1 drink per day for women and 2 per day for men. Less is better.
- Beverages are the number one source of sugar in the American diet. It is surprising how many calories one large beverage can contain when it is sweetened with sugar. A 32 ounce soda is upwards of 300 calories.
- Some studies indicate that beverage calories may not actually register as calories, causing most individuals to consume too many calories in a day. Over time this may add up.

Source: Hollis Bass, MEd, RD, Communicating Food for Health

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**CORNELL WEBSITES FOR THE GARDENER**

It might feel a little premature to think about gardening; but now is actually the perfect time to get a jump on your garden planning and preparations. You may have already received enticing seed catalogs in the mail.

Cornell offers many resourceful webpages to help the home gardener make the most out of the growing season.

- **Portal to all things gardening at Cornell:**
  http://blogs.cornell.edu/garden/

- **Cornell University Home Gardening:**
  http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/homegardening

- **Cornell University Department of Horticulture:**
  http://www.gardening.cornell.edu

- **For information on sending a soil sample:**
  http://www.dairyone.com/AgroOne/default.htm

- **Cornell Plantations:**
  http://www.plantations.cornell.edu
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