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8 Steps to prevent the flu without a shot



This time of year, the medical powers that be — doctors, pharmacies and the media — urge us to get the flu shot. For years, my parents have taken this advice to heart — they get their flu shot by October. More often than not, my husband chooses to get a flu shot as well. Me? The two years that I did get the flu shot, I promptly came down with the flu.

I asked two renowned health and wellness experts to weigh in with their thoughts on the subject.

Dr. Frank Lipman — a New York City-based integrative doctor, functional medicine practitioner and author of *Revive* — says, "I'm not an anti-flu vaccine die-hard. If a patient of mine really wants a flu shot, they can get one, but I don't recommend it to my patients, my family or get a flu shot, myself. The risk-to-benefit ratio of the flu shot is not worth taking, and I'm not convinced of their effectiveness," says Lipman, who has written about the effectiveness of flu shots based on several studies.

Two exceptions to this rule, he says, are someone who has chronic bronchitis or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or someone who is very frail and elderly (for example, 80+ years). "However, I wouldn't recommend the flu shot to a healthy 70-year-old," he says.

Chris Kresser — California-based licensed acupuncturist, functional medicine practitioner and author of the best-selling *Your Personal Paleo Code* — agrees.

"I'm not 'for' or 'against' the flu vaccine. But, I do think it's important that people understand what the research says about their efficacy and potential risks, so they can make an informed decision," says Kresser.

When flu vaccine is effective and when it's not

The flu vaccine is less likely to be effective if the strains of flu in the vaccine don't match the strains of flu in the environment, says Kresser, who adds, "but even when

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the match is perfect, 1 percent of flu-vaccinated individuals end up with the flu compared to 4 percent of unvaccinated individuals. Matching the strains of flu that are currently around and the vaccine is difficult because viruses evolve quickly, and it's hard for vaccine producers to keep up."

How the flu shot actually prevents the flu

Kresser points to a large review of studies done by The Cochrane Collaboration that found you need to vaccinate between 33 and 99 healthy people to prevent a single case of flu — depending on the match between the vaccine and circulating strains of the virus. (Interestingly, 15 of the 30 trials reviewed were also funded by industry.)

Your flu prevention strategy

Whether you get the flu shot or not, the simple act of regularly washing your hands with soap and hot water is one of the most effective means of cold and flu prevention. Basing a study on a three-month hand-washing intervention (targeting pupils ages 5 to 14 at two elementary schools in Denmark), Danish researchers found that hand-washing programs effectively reduced school absenteeism.

In addition to mindful hand washing, the best way to prevent the flu is to be mindful of maintaining gut health: This is where 70 to 80 percent of our immune system resides. To do this:

1. Eat a nutrient-dense, whole foods-based diet

Some of the most nutrient-dense foods include organ meats from grass-fed animal sources (like liver) and cold-water fatty fish, seasonal vegetables, fruits and starchy tubers (beets, parsnips, sweet potatoes, turnips) as well as nuts (if properly soaked first).

You want to avoid eating foods that weaken the immune system, such as excess sugar — in any form — whether as sweet treats (candy, sodas, cookies) or as refined flours and grains (bread, pasta, boxed cereals, pasta, crackers, processed baked goods); legumes (not properly soaked and prepared); industrial seed oils (canola, corn, soybean, safflower, etc.) and other processed or refined foods.

2. Get enough fat-soluble vitamins A and D, which support the immune system

The highest levels of vitamin A can be obtained from organ meats sourced from animals, including cod liver oil, duck liver, beef liver, goose liver, liverwurst sausage (pork) and lamb liver. The most efficient way of getting vitamin D is exposing bare skin (face and arms) to sunlight. Fermented cod liver oil, however, provides a synergistic source of both vitamins A and D as well as EPA and DHA — fatty acids that help reduce inflammation.

3. Drink bone broth

Mineral deficiency (which contributes to the development of chronic diseases) is, unfortunately, all too common today due to

modern farming practices that have stripped increasing amounts of nutrients from the soil in which we grow our food, according to several studies. Properly prepared bone broth, on the other hand, is an excellent source of bioavailable, immunity-boosting minerals such as magnesium, zinc, calcium, phosphorus, sulphur and other trace minerals.

4. Take a probiotic

Promoting healthy gut flora — where the good bacteria outnumber the bad — will help your body better protect itself against foreign microbes, including viruses.

5. Take vitamin C

Though research on vitamin C and flu prevention is somewhat mixed, says Kresser, anecdotally, many people report improved resistance to and shortened duration of colds and flus when taking vitamin C. Kresser usually recommends the liposomal form of vitamin C (absorbed better than other forms): "For prevention, 1,000 milligrams a day on an empty stomach is a good starting place. If you already have a cold or flu, aim for 1,000 milligrams two to four times a day (to bowel tolerance)."

6. Limit your sugar intake as much as possible

Excess refined sugar consumption feeds bad bacteria in the gut, contributes to inflammation and depletes your body of much-needed vitamins and minerals.

7. Get quality sleep and rest

Your body naturally craves more sleep and rest during the colder months. And getting enough sleep is critical to optimizing your immune function and gut health. Shortchanging yourself on sleep can increase inflammation levels in the body (i.e., high white blood cell count). If you don't get enough sleep, you also won't be able to produce the hormones melatonin and prolactin in large amounts — which can negatively affect the bacteria in your gut and increase susceptibility to infection.

8. Manage stress

Stress causes biochemical changes that affect the physiological function of the gut as well as your gut flora, which can compromise immune health.

Data Master: Cody Welch

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Senior Companion Volunteer



Jeri Collins has been a Senior Companion Volunteer for fifteen years and in April will begin her sixteenth year. She has been selected as the Rogers County "Champion of Compassion" for January 2018, because of her time and dedication to this great volunteer program. Jeri said, "I really enjoy it because it's not only helping others, but it's helping me by getting me out of the house and around others." Since Jeri has been such a wonderful volunteer, we wanted you to get to know her a little better. We asked her what her favorite time of the year is, she quickly said "Thanksgiving, where all my family finds time to get together." Another fun fact about Jeri is she enjoys ventriloquism, Particularly Freddy Fatter. When asked what her first job was she stated, she worked at her local Five and Dime as a stocker. Lastly, when asked what was the most interesting place she had ever visited, she said Alaska. Jeri went on to say, she took a 10 day Alaskan cruise with her eldest son. Jeri thank you for your hard work and dedication, without you and the other volunteers this program would not be the success that it is today. The Senior Companion Program is currently accepting application for stipend volunteer positions. Please contact the Rogers County Health Department 918-341-3166. This article was made possible by the Multimedia and Graphic Arts Department, NTC, Afton Campus.

Data Master: Eric Peachy



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How Many Dogs Are Too Many?



Before I met my husband, he ran with a pack. He had four dogs at home under one roof — a boxer, a cocker spaniel, a Chihuahua and a blue heeler — and as he described it, it was utter chaos.

Take more than two dogs to the dog park or around the block for an evening walk, and you'll get a few funny looks. It's the general consensus that one or two dogs per household is acceptable in America. Any more, and you might become known as the local dog lady, and you may find that your two legs can't keep up with your wolf pack.

Statistics support this accepted norm — the American Veterinary Medical Foundation confirms that the 36.5 percent of dog-owning households in the U.S. have 1.6 dogs on average. How many pets you have can also depend on where you live. People in the Northeast, who most likely live in urban areas with less backyard space, have fewer pets than the Midwesterners living in wide-open spaces.

But this still doesn't answer the question everyone wants to know: Is it OK to have more than two dogs? How many dogs are

too many? How many dogs can one person or family reasonably handle?

Is one the loneliest number?

While Three Dog Night probably wasn't talking about pet companionship when they sang "One is the Loneliest Number," many pet owners take this to heart. The thinking is that, just like humans, man's best friend can get lonely when it's left at home alone all day long without another animal friend. Rounding out that 1.6-dogs-per-household statistic, pet owners often decide to get a second dog to keep their first dog company.

This was our rationale when we adopted a second Chihuahua to pair with our first. We figured that since our family was gone or busy for most of the day, at the very least the dogs would have each other. After eight years as yappy frenemies, our plan appears to have worked. On the good days, our Chihuahuas seem to take comfort in each other.

But the decision to get a second dog isn't always so straightforward, cautions Dr. Patrick Mahaney, Los Angeles house-

call veterinarian and owner of California Pet Acupuncture and Wellness (CPAW), Inc. There are several things to consider before adding dog number two to your pack. "Having several dogs in one's household can be a positive or negative experience, depending on a variety of factors. If your household contains very young children, elderly folks or those having compromised mobility or immune system function (cancer, HIV, pregnancy), then having more dogs could contribute to increased household demands, stressors or even create the potential for injury or illness (flea/tick-borne disease, intestinal parasites, etc.)," Dr. Mahaney says.

David Wright of iWorkdogs is a fan of owning multiple dogs — as long as certain criteria are met first. Wright says that contrary to popular belief, one reason not to get a second dog is for the sole purpose of keeping the first dog company. "The problem is when people get new dogs to keep their current dogs company. That's not always a good idea. It's like if your parents were to pick your friends. There's no guarantee that the dogs will get along," he explains.

Wright advises, "When you add another dog to your family, make sure you're adding that dog because you want another dog. Keep in mind every time you add a dog, you're adding double the work and half the time spent with each dog. Owning multiple dogs becomes unsafe when you can't control your dogs. I can't stress the importance of basic obedience enough. If you can't call one dog to come away from a distraction, then you should probably fix that before you add another one."

Three is the magic number

If we all followed Wright's golden rule for pet ownership, then backyard dog packs would never get out of control, and the world would be a happy place. It's important to focus on the training and behavior of one dog before adding another, as Wright noted, but most pet owners are still looking for a solid number. How many dogs in one household are considered safe?

This is where the good news comes in. Most animal care experts widely agree that three is not a crowd when it comes to owning more than one dog. Unlike that dreaded middle child syndrome you see in three-kid families, having three well-trained pups can be harmonious when the dogs balance each other out. "It has been my experience working with pets and pet owners that three dogs is the perfect 'tribe.' I especially like the idea of having the dogs be of various ages," says pet grief coach Judy Helm Wright.


Karen Nash, animal rescuer and owner of pet care service Sniff Snout, agrees that two or three dogs are better than one, though more than three can pose a problem. She explains, "I find for the owner, two or three at the max is a comfortable number to handle. I have had four dogs, and even being a professional, I found it to be a lot. With two or three, you still have enough time to devote to all and still give individual attention."

Right now we're a two-dog family, but I have no problem pointing out the error of my husband's ways if he ever wants to expand to a four-dog household again. The "right" number of dogs in a home is an individual decision and depends on factors like time, space and money — three small dogs would be easier and cheaper to care for than three large dogs, for example. But as Nash and Wright pointed out, that's where the balance starts to tip to a point that can be dangerous for a domesticated dog pack: Three's company, and four dogs are too many.

Data Master: Karen Deffenbaugh



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Getting to know the Lutherans

God Loves All

George had just joined our church, and he'd be the first to tell you that he hadn't done anything to earn the attention he was receiving. "All I did was get sick. All I did was come down with cancer, and believe me, I didn't want to do that – not at all," he said.

His surgery had been successful. As we visited during his recovery, he realized he was completely surrounded by flowers and cards from members of the congregation; people he barely knew, even some he hadn't met. He was confused, wondering why they would love him like this. After all, he hadn't done anything at all for them, and was new to the area and the church.

What George didn't know is that Christ's Church is not like what we're used to in life. In life, you get rewarded for your special contribution. And, if you offer no contribution that's noticed by others, you can lead a somewhat invisible life. In American life, you're recognized by what you have to offer. Not so in Christ's Church.

In God's kingdom, you're not valued because of how much you earn, how hard you work, how much you've volunteered, or even how long you've been a member of a congregation. You're loved, because God loves all of his children equally, no matter what they've done for him. All of God's children are valued, because God the Father loves his children. It's really that simple. But don't take my word for it. Read Matthew 20:1-16 and hear it from God himself.

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Tummy Trouble? Stressed? A Probiotic Might Do You Good

If you've entered a drugstore, browsed a grocery store aisle or engaged in any kind of health-minded conversation over the past few years, you're at least semi-familiar with probiotics. These microorganisms have become an increasingly common topic of medical interest and research thanks to their potential to support many aspects of health and wellness.

Here's how it works: Your gut — or more formally, your gastrointestinal tract — contains over 500 bacterial species that work together to facilitate digestion, support the immune system and more. Probiotics are naturally occurring "good" bacteria that live in your gut. When the balance between healthy and not-so-healthy bacteria gets out of whack, things can go awry. You might notice this in the form of occasional tummy trouble, changes in mood or even in the appearance of your skin.

That's where probiotic supplements come in. There's scientific evidence that shows the right strains of bacteria can positively impact overall health. From lactobacilli to promote vaginal health to *Saccharomyces boulardii* when you're playing tourist, here's what to look for.

For medication use

Some medications, like antibiotics, work by killing bacteria. The trouble is they don't differentiate between good and bad bacteria. This means certain medications can reduce the good bacteria in your gut, throwing your microbiome — your internal ecosystem — off balance and allowing undesirable bacteria to overgrow. Probiotics are useful for restoring healthy microbial balance, provided they are formulated on clinical research showing efficacy.

For digestive health

Gas, bloating or a disruption in your daily bowel habits are all common signs of an unbalanced gut microbiome. Your intestines absorb nutrients from food, but they also form a critical barrier that keeps out unwanted microorganisms, which can impact digestive health. Probiotics play an important role in maintaining intestinal barrier integrity by preventing bad bacteria from colonizing the gastrointestinal tract, and they help in the production of essential nutrients like vitamin B12 and vitamin K.*

For immune health

During the winter months, weather changes and more time indoors can make it harder for your immune system to stay up to snuff. Because approximately 70% of your immune system lives in your gut, a daily probiotic — like HMF Super Powder — can

contribute to a healthy immune system.*

For staying healthy at school

In a recent clinical trial, HMF Fit for School — a chewable probiotic for kids containing four different probiotic strains as well as vitamin C and vitamin D — significantly supported upper respiratory health in school children when compared to a placebo.*

For pregnancy

A healthy microbiome is just as important for a mother as it is for her baby. Taking probiotics during pregnancy — with a doctor's approval, of course — can not only support a pregnant woman's digestive and vaginal health, but it may contribute to a healthy microbiome in newborns.*

For mood and cognitive health

There's early science to suggest that the microbiome affects our brain. Because the brain and gut "talk" to each other, there's growing evidence showing that probiotics can impact mood and cognitive health.*

For travel troubles

You've been looking forward to your meticulously planned trip abroad for months only to have your good time disturbed by a none-too-cooperative stomach. Whether it's the result of jet lag, stress or unfamiliar food and water, you may find some support in your carry-on if you pack HMF Travel, which contains *Saccharomyces boulardii* and four other proprietary probiotic strains to support gastrointestinal health while you're on-the-go.* Unlike some formulas, which require refrigeration, this formula is shelf-stable, so it will maintain its potency when you're far from home.

Before you begin taking any type of probiotic, speak with your doctor and/or pharmacist about whether it is safe and right for you.

Data Master: Karen Deffenbaugh

This Month in History: February

February 1, 1960 - In Greensboro, North Carolina, four African American students sat down and ordered coffee at a lunch counter inside a Woolworth's store. They were refused service, but did not leave. Instead, they waited all day. The scene was repeated over the next few days, with protests spreading to other southern states, resulting in the eventual arrest of over 1,600 persons for participating in sit-ins.

February 1, 2003 - Sixteen minutes before it was scheduled to land, the Space Shuttle Columbia broke apart in flight over west Texas, killing all seven crew members. The accident may have resulted from damage caused during liftoff when a piece of insulating foam from the external fuel tank broke off, piercing a hole in the shuttle's left wing that allowed hot gases to penetrate the wing upon re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere. This was the second space shuttle lost in flight. In January 1986, Challenger exploded during liftoff.

Birthdays - Hattie Caraway (1878-1950) the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate, was born in Bakersville, Tennessee. Her husband became the U.S. Senator from Arkansas. Following his death in 1931, she filled the remainder of his term, then was elected herself, serving a total of 14 years.

Birthdays - Hollywood director John Ford (1895-1973) was born in Cape Elizabeth, Maine. Known for *The Grapes of Wrath* and *The Searchers*, he also served in World War II as chief of the Photographic Unit of OSS, and earned two Academy Awards for documentaries made during the war.

February 2, 1848 - The war between the U.S. and Mexico ended with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. In exchange for \$15 million, the U.S. acquired the areas encompassing parts or all of present day California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, and Texas. The treaty was ratified on March 10, 1848.

February 2, 1990 - In South Africa, the 30-year-old ban on the African National Congress was lifted by President F.W. de Klerk, who also promised to free Nelson Mandela and remove restrictions on political opposition groups.

Birthdays - Irish novelist and poet James Joyce (1882-1941) was born in Dublin, Ireland. His works include; *Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Ulysses*, and *Finegan's Wake*.

February 3, 1865 - A four-hour peace conference occurred between President Abraham Lincoln and Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens at Hampton Roads, Virginia. The meeting was unsuccessful as President Lincoln insisted there could be no armistice until the Confederates acknowledged Federal authority. The Confederates wanted an armistice first. Thus the Civil War continued.

February 3, 1870 - The 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, guaranteeing the right of citizens to vote, regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

February 3, 1913 - The 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, granting Congress the authority to collect income taxes.

February 3, 1943 - An extraordinary act of heroism occurred in the icy waters off Greenland after the U.S. Army transport ship *Dorchester* was hit by a German torpedo and began to sink rapidly. When it became apparent there were not enough life jackets, four U.S. Army chaplains on board removed theirs, handed them to frightened young soldiers, and chose to go down with the ship while praying.

Birthdays - The first female physician in the U.S., Elizabeth

Blackwell (1821-1910) was born near Bristol, England. As a girl, her family moved to New York State. She was awarded her MD by the Medical Institute of Geneva, New York, in 1849. She then established a hospital in New York City run by an all-female staff. She was also active in training women to be nurses for service in the American Civil War.

Birthdays - American artist and illustrator Norman Rockwell (1894-1978) was born in New York City. Best known for depicting ordinary scenes from small town American life for the covers of *Saturday Evening Post* magazine.

February 4, 1861 - Apache Chief Cochise was arrested in Arizona by the U.S. Army for raiding a ranch. Cochise then escaped and declared war, beginning the period known as the Apache Wars, which lasted 25 years.

February 4, 1985 - Twenty countries in the United Nations signed a document entitled "Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment."

Birthdays - Thaddeus Kosciuszko (1746-1817) was born in Poland. He served in the American Revolution, building the first fortifications at West Point. He then returned to Poland and fought against a Russian invasion.

Birthdays - Aviation pioneer Charles Lindbergh (1902-1974) was born in Detroit, Michigan. He made the first non-stop solo flight from New York to Paris, May 20-21, 1927.

February 5, 1917 - The new constitution of Mexico, allowing for sweeping social changes, was adopted.

February 6, 1788 - Massachusetts became the sixth state to ratify the new U.S. Constitution, by a vote of 187 to 168.

February 6, 1933 - The 20th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was adopted. It set the date for the Presidential Inauguration as January 20th, instead of the old date of March 4th. It also sets January 3rd as the official opening date of Congress.

February 6, 1952 - King George VI of England died. Upon his death, his daughter Princess Elizabeth became Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Her actual coronation took place on June 2, 1953.

Birthdays - Aaron Burr (1756-1836) was born in Newark, New Jersey. In 1804, Vice President Burr challenged Alexander Hamilton to a duel over Hamilton's negative remarks and mortally wounded him. Burr was later tried for treason over allegations he was planning to invade Mexico as part of a scheme to establish his own empire in the Southwest, but was acquitted.

Birthdays - Legendary baseball player George Herman "Babe" Ruth (1895-1948) was born in Baltimore, Maryland. Ruth held or shared 60 Major League records, including pitching 29 consecutive scoreless innings and hitting 714 home runs.

Birthdays - Ronald Reagan, (1911-2004) the 40th U.S. President, was born in Tampico, Illinois. Reagan spent 30 years as an entertainer in radio, film, and television before becoming governor of California in 1966. Elected to the White House in 1980, he survived an assassination attempt and became the most popular president since Franklin Roosevelt.

February 7, 1795 - The 11th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, limiting the powers of the Federal Judiciary over the states by prohibiting Federal lawsuits against individual states.

Birthdays - Thomas More (1478-1535) was born in London, England. He was a lawyer, scholar, and held the title Lord Chancellor of England. As a devout Catholic, he refused to acknowledge the divorce of King Henry VIII from Queen Catherine, thereby refusing to acknowledge the King's religious supremacy. He was

charged with treason, found guilty and beheaded in 1535, with his head then displayed from Tower Bridge. Four hundred years later, in 1935, he was canonized by Pope Pius XI.

Birthdays - British novelist Charles Dickens (1812-1870) was born in Portsmouth, England. He examined social inequalities through his works including; David Copperfield, Oliver Twist, and Nicholas Nickleby. In 1843, he wrote A Christmas Carol in just a few weeks, an enormously popular work even today.

Birthdays - American social critic and novelist Sinclair Lewis (1885-1951) was born in Sauk Center, Minnesota. He received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1930. His works include; Main Street, Babbitt, and It Can't Happen Here.

February 8, 1587 - Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, was beheaded at Fotheringhay, England, after 19 years as a prisoner of Queen Elizabeth I. She became entangled in the complex political events surrounding the Protestant Reformation in England and was charged with complicity in a plot to assassinate Elizabeth.

February 8, 1910 - The Boy Scouts of America was founded by William Boyce in Washington, D.C., modeled after the British Boy Scouts.

Birthdays - Union Civil War General William Tecumseh Sherman (1820-1891) was born in Lancaster, Ohio.

February 9, 1943 - During World War II in the Pacific, U.S. troops captured Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands after six months of battle, with 9,000 Japanese and 2,000 Americans killed.

Birthdays - William Henry Harrison (1773-1841) the 9th U.S. President was born in Berkeley, Virginia. He took office on March 4, 1841 and died only 32 days later after developing pneumonia from the cold weather during his inaugural ceremonies.

February 10, 1942 - The first Medal of Honor during World War II was awarded to 2nd Lt. Alexander Nininger (posthumously) for heroism during the Battle of Bataan.

February 10, 1967 - The 25th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, clarifying the procedures for presidential succession in the event of the disability of a sitting president.

February 11th - Celebrated in Japan as the founding date of the Japanese nation, which occurred with the accession to the throne of the first Emperor, Jimmu, in 660 BC.

February 11, 1929 - Italian dictator Benito Mussolini granted political independence to Vatican City and recognized the sovereignty of the Pope (Holy See) over the area, measuring about 110 acres.

February 11, 1990 - In South Africa, Nelson Mandela, at age 71, was released from prison after serving 27 years of a life sentence on charges of attempting to overthrow the apartheid government. In April 1994, he was elected president in the first all-race elections.

February 11, 2011 - In Egypt, President Hosni Mubarak resigned amid a massive protest calling for his ouster. Thousands of young Egyptians and others had protested non-stop for 18 days in Cairo, Alexandria and elsewhere. Mubarak had ruled Egypt for nearly 30 years, functioning as a virtual dictator.

Birthdays - American inventor Thomas Edison (1847-1931) was born in Milan, Ohio. Throughout his lifetime he acquired over 1,200 patents including the incandescent bulb, phonograph and movie camera. Best known for his quote, "Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration."

February 12, 1999 - The impeachment trial of President Bill Clinton in the U.S. Senate ended. With the whole world watching via television, Senators stood up one by one during the final roll call to vote "guilty" or "not guilty." On Article 1 (charging Clinton with perjury) 55 senators, including 10 Republicans and

all 45 Democrats voted not guilty. On Article 2 (charging Clinton with obstruction of justice) the Senate split evenly, 50 for and 50 against the President. With the necessary two-thirds majority not having been achieved, President Clinton was thus acquitted on both charges and served out the remainder of his term of office lasting through January 20, 2001.

Birthdays - Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) the 16th U.S. President was born in Hardin County, Kentucky. He led the nation through the tumultuous Civil War, freed the slaves, composed the Gettysburg Address, and established Thanksgiving.

Birthdays - Author and naturalist Charles Darwin (1809-1882) was born in Shrewsbury, England. Best known for his work Origin of the Species concerning the theory of evolution.

February 13

February 13, 1635 - Boston Latin School, the first tax-payer supported (public) school in America was established in Boston, Massachusetts.

February 13, 1945 - During World War II in Europe, British and American planes began massive bombing raids on Dresden, Germany. A four-day firestorm erupted that was visible for 200 miles and engulfed the historic old city, killing an estimated 135,000 German civilians.

Birthdays - American artist Grant Wood (1892-1942) was born near Anamosa, Iowa. Best known for his painting American Gothic featuring a farm couple.

February 14th - Celebrated as (Saint) Valentine's Day around the world, now one of the most widely observed unofficial holidays in which romantic greeting cards and gifts are exchanged.

February 14, 1849 - Photographer Mathew Brady took the first photograph of a U.S. President in office, James Polk.

February 14, 1929 - The St. Valentine's Day massacre occurred in Chicago as seven members of the Bugs Moran gang were gunned down by five of Al Capone's mobsters posing as police.

February 15 Return to Top of Page

February 15, 1898 - In Havana, the U.S. Battleship Maine was blown up while at anchor and quickly sank with 260 crew members lost. The incident inflamed public opinion in the U.S., resulting in a declaration of war against Spain on April 25, 1898, amid cries of "Remember the Maine!"

February 15, 1933 - An assassination attempt on newly elected U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt occurred in Miami, Florida. A spectator deflected the gunman's aim. As a result, Chicago Mayor Anton Cermak was shot and killed instead. The gunman, an Italian immigrant, was captured and later sentenced to death.

February 15, 1989 - Soviet Russia completed its military withdrawal from Afghanistan after nine years of unsuccessful involvement in the civil war between Muslim rebel groups and the Russian-backed Afghan government. Over 15,000 Russian soldiers had been killed in the fighting.

Birthdays - Astronomer and physicist Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) was born in Pisa, Italy. He was the first astronomer to use a telescope and advanced the theory that the sun, not the earth, was the center of the solar system.

Birthdays - Inventor Cyrus McCormick (1809-1884) was born in Rockbridge County, Virginia. He invented the horse-drawn mechanical reaper, a machine that freed farmers from hard labor and contributed to the development and cultivation of vast areas of the American Great Plains.

Birthdays - Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) was born in Adams, Massachusetts. A pioneer in women's rights, she worked tirelessly for woman's suffrage (right to vote) and in 1872 was arrested after voting (illegally) in the presidential election. She was commemorated in 1979 with the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin, thus

became the first American woman to have her image on a U.S. coin.

Birthdays - Entertainer and politician Sonny Bono (1935-1998) was born in Detroit, Michigan. Following a career as a popular singer, he became mayor of Palm Springs, California, then became a Republican congressman, serving until his accidental death from a skiing mishap.

February 17, 1865 - During the American Civil War, Fort Sumter in South Carolina was returned to the Union after nearly a year and a half under Confederate control. The fort had been the scene of the first shots of the war.

February 17, 1909 - Apache Chief Geronimo (1829-1909) died while in captivity at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He had led a small group of warriors on raids throughout Arizona and New Mexico. Caught once, he escaped. The U.S. Army then sent 5,000 men to recapture him.

February 20, 1943 - German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel broke through American lines at Kasserine Pass in North Africa as inexperienced U.S. Troops lost their first major battle of World War II in Europe, with 1,000 Americans killed.

February 20, 1962 - Astronaut John Glenn became the first American launched into orbit. Traveling aboard the "Friendship 7" spacecraft, Glenn reached an altitude of 162 miles (260 kilometers) and completed three orbits in a flight lasting just under five hours. Glenn was the third American in space, preceded by Alan Shepard and Virgil "Gus" Grissom who had each completed short sub-orbital flights. All of them had been preceded by Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin who was the first human in space, completing one orbit on April 12, 1961 - a feat that intensified the already ongoing Space Race between the Russians and Americans. Glenn's successful flight showed the Americans had caught up and was followed in September 1962 by President John F. Kennedy's open call to land an American on the moon before the decade's end.

February 21, 1965 - Former Black Muslim leader Malcolm X (1925-1965) was shot and killed while delivering a speech in a ballroom in New York City.

February 21, 1972 - President Richard Nixon arrived in China for historic meetings with Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Premier Chou En-lai.

February 21, 1994 - CIA agent Aldrich Ames was arrested on charges he spied for the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1991.

February 22, 1956 - In Montgomery, Alabama, 80 participants in the three-month-old bus boycott voluntarily gave themselves up for arrest after an ultimatum from white city leaders. Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks were among those arrested. Later in 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court mandated desegregation of the buses.

Birthdays - George Washington (1732-1799) was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia. He served as commander of the Continental Army during the American Revolution and became the first U.S. President.

February 23, 1942 - During World War II, the first attack on the U.S. mainland occurred as a Japanese submarine shelled an oil refinery near Santa Barbara, California, causing minor damage.

February 23, 1991 - In Desert Storm, the Allied ground offensive began after a devastating month-long air campaign targeting Iraqi troops in both Iraq and Kuwait.

Birthdays - African American educator and leader W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963) was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

Birthdays - Historian William L. Shirer (1904-1993) was born in Chicago, Illinois. As a news reporter stationed in Europe, he witnessed the rise of Adolf Hitler and reported on the surrender of France. Following the war he wrote the first major history of Nazi Germany, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*.

February 24, 1582 - Pope Gregory XIII corrected mistakes on the Julian calendar by dropping 10 days and directing that the day after October 4, 1582 would be October 15th. The Gregorian, or New Style calendar, was then adopted by Catholic countries, followed gradually by Protestant and other nations.

February 24, 1867 - The House of Representatives voted to impeach President Andrew Johnson. The vote followed bitter opposition by the Radical Republicans in Congress toward Johnson's reconstruction policies in the South. However, the effort to remove him failed in the Senate by just one vote.

February 26, 1848 - The Communist Manifesto pamphlet was published by two young socialists, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. It advocated the abolition of all private property and a system in which workers own all means of production, land, factories and machinery.

February 26, 1994 - Political foes of Russian President Boris Yeltsin were freed by a general amnesty granted by the new Russian Parliament.

February 27, 1950 - The 22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, limiting the president to two terms or a maximum of ten years in office.

February 27, 1991 - In Desert Storm, the 100-hour ground war ended as Allied troops entered Kuwait just four days after launching their offensive against Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces.

Birthdays - American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) was born in Portland, Maine. Best known for Paul Revere's Ride, The Song of Hiawatha, and The Wreck of the Hesperus.

February 28, 1844 - During a demonstration of naval fire power, one of the guns aboard the USS Princeton exploded, killing several top U.S. government officials on the steamer ship, and narrowly missed killing President John Tyler.

February 28, 1986 - Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme (1927-1986) was assassinated in Stockholm while exiting a movie theater with his wife.

February 28, 1994 - NATO conducted its first combat action in its 45 year history as four Bosnian Serb jets were shot down by American fighters in a no-fly zone.

Data Master: Tino Hensley

11 Healthy Pantry Staples You Should Stock Up On

When you're pinched for time, it's easy to be tempted by the call of the drive-thru or those sodium-blasted cans of condensed soup. That's why stocking your pantry with versatile, healthy ingredients is so important — when you start getting hangry, these foods step in to make easy meals that taste great (and make you feel pretty good too).

1. Quinoa

Quinoa is a great source of vegan protein, perfect for solving your #MeatlessMonday woes.

2. Canned beans

Beans taste great in a variety of dishes, and the canned variety cook up fast. They're high in fiber, so they'll keep you feeling full for longer, and do wonders for your digestion.

3. Tomato paste

Tomato paste is rich in umami — just a tablespoon can enhance the taste of an otherwise dull soup or sauce. It's also full of lycopene, an antioxidant that can reduce the risk of disease, including some forms of cancer.

4. Tuna and salmon

Two servings of seafood each week can reduce the risk of heart disease — all the more reason to stock up! Tuna and salmon are high-protein seafoods that are rich in a range of nutrients. Buy it in a pouch so it's ready to eat, no draining required — this way, you're always ready to add seafood to your pastas, salads and sandwiches.

5. Brown rice

Simply swapping brown rice for white can make your pantry a healthier place, and may even lower your risk of type-2 diabetes according to a study by researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard. Choose a quick-cooking variety to get dinner on the table faster.

6. No-salt-added canned tomatoes

Canned tomatoes are great for making quick sauces or adding flavor to chili, soups and stews, and they often taste as good (if not better) than fresh tomatoes. Best of all, tomatoes boast a variety of important nutrients, including vitamins A and C.

7. Quick-cooking ancient grains

Why ancient grains? They're full of fiber, keep blood sugar stable, help lower cholesterol and more. Quick-cooking versions of ancient grains like barley and quinoa make it easy to incorporate these grains into your meals.

8. Whole-grain pasta

Pasta is delicious, and whole-wheat pasta has more fiber and protein than its more refined counterparts, meaning you stay full longer.

9. Oatmeal

Oatmeal is high in fiber, low in fat and a good source of B vitamins. It's also inexpensive, meaning a healthy breakfast is never

out of reach, and has been found to lower levels of LDL, or "bad," cholesterol. For a quick breakfast in the morning, try one of these overnight oatmeal recipes.

10. Nuts

Nuts are packed with nutrients and protein, so they're a great food to keep on-hand. Use them to top a salad or yogurt, or grab a handful for a quick and nutritious snack.

11. Dried fruit

Add a pinch of sweetness to your salads, cereals and desserts with dried fruit — there's no prep involved, and it has a much longer shelf life, making it an easier choice than fresh fruit.

Data Master: Steve Burdick



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Baking Without Eggs Is Possible With These 6 Substitutes



Whether you're allergic to eggs or are just a baking fiend who can't seem to keep enough huevos stocked up in the fridge, you probably know by now that whipping up baked goods sans eggs is a serious problem. Yup, it seems like pretty much every recipe under the sun calls for the suckers, which means you may be stuck running to the grocery store when you get a late-night baked goods craving.

However, there are alternatives to eggs that you can use to pull off your culinary endeavors. Next time you're knee deep in a baking project that calls for eggs, give these substitutes a try.

1. Applesauce

Use 1/4 cup of unsweetened applesauce in place of one egg in most baking recipes. Some sources say to mix it with 1/2 teaspoon of baking powder. If all you have is sweetened applesauce, then simply reduce the amount of sugar in the recipe. Applesauce is also a popular healthy replacement for oil in many baked goods.

2. Banana

Use 1/4 cup of mashed banana (from about half a banana) instead of one egg when baking. Note that this may impart a mild banana flavor to whatever you are cooking, which could be a good thing.

3. Flaxseeds

Believe it or not, hearty-healthy flaxseeds can be used as an egg substitute! Simply mix 1 tablespoon of ground flaxseeds with 3 tablespoons of water until fully absorbed and viscous. Use in place of one egg. (You can use pre-ground flaxseeds or grind them yourself in a spice or coffee grinder.)

4. Vegetable oil

Typically 1/4 cup of vegetable oil can be substituted for one egg when baking. If you are short more than one egg, you will want

to try another method, as any more vegetable oil may make the recipe too oily or greasy.

5. Water, oil and baking powder

Whisk together 2 tablespoons of water, 1 teaspoon of oil (like corn or vegetable oil) and 2 teaspoons of baking powder. Use this in place of one egg. When used in cookies and other baked goods, it works so well no one would ever know.

6. Aquafaba

The hot new egg replacement is bean juice — specifically the liquid that comes in your can of chickpeas. It may not work for everything, but if your recipe calls for egg whites, whip up some aquafaba instead (about 3 tablespoons per replaced egg). For best results, use an unsalted variety.

After successfully using these food substitutions, you may employ them for more than emergency backup in the future. They are all vegan alternatives and, with the exception of the vegetable oil, are more heart-healthy than eggs. Using banana, applesauce or other puréed fruit in baked goods is a wonderful tactic to boost flavor and make them incredibly moist. Talk about a happy accident!

Data Master: Karen Deffenbaugh

12 Ways to Raise More Independent Kids

Dealing with my kids' constant demands is one of my least favorite parts of parenthood. Someone always needs another snack or expects me to know where to find their bike helmet or needs help putting on pants that they decided to take off completely, underwear still attached, inside-out in order to use the restroom.

I didn't sign up for this parenting gig expecting to be a butt-wiper, 24-hour concession stand and water boy, and I want to believe there will be a day (someday soon, I hope) when my kids will not need me quite so much. Therefore, I am trying to actively make sure I am doing my best to raise independent kids. Here are a few tips on how to make your kids more independent so you can get a little break from their constant neediness (or at least train them to get their own snacks).

Ages 3 – 6

Start a chore chart: Begin chore charts early on to start teaching your kids that you are not their maid or butler. Making their bed, cleaning their rooms and even making a simple snack for themselves are all things they can do given enough time and practice.

Get in a routine: Visual routine cards can help young kids get into the habit of completing their morning and evening routines without so much nagging from you.

Learn their vitals: Now is the time for kids to learn their age, phone number and home address — and it doesn't need to be hard when you use fun games or songs.

Remember: Patience is needed for progress. Teaching kids to do things for themselves at this age takes a lot of time and repetition. It is way quicker and easier to just do things for them, but give them the time and space they need to gain independence.

Ages 7 – 10

Start the alarm: Buy your kid an alarm clock and take the morning wake-up call off your to-do list.

Time to speak up: Ordering at restaurants, answering questions, ordering pizza on the phone — it's time to make sure your kid knows how to hold conversations with adults and convey their message clearly.

Begin personal planning: Move on from the visual routine and let your kids start mapping out their days and weeks with more detail. A great way to get them interested in planning is to let them take the lead on some vacation activity-planning.

Remember: Resist the urge to save the day. Kids are going to make mistakes and want to quit, but instead of swooping in a fixing it for them, give them the space they need to figure out solutions on their own.

Ages 11 – 14

Be budget savvy: Now is the time to start a checking and savings account and giving your kids a little more freedom with their money. Teach them how to balance a checkbook and introduce

them to the inner workings of the family budget.

Make appointments: Does your kid need a haircut or dentist appointment? Have them pick up the phone and make the call.

Dinner duty: If the 8- to 13-year-olds on MasterChef Junior can whip up a croquembouche, your kid can probably handle making a casserole every now and again. Give them some weekly dinner duties and let them find recipes they feel equipped to master.

Remember: They can do a lot more than your think. As the little kid years fade away, they want to test out what it's like to "be grown up," so make room for them to grow in maturity by upping their freedom appropriately.

Ages 15 – 18

Get a job: Whether it's babysitting on the weekends, starting an online business or slinging hot dogs in the Target food court (even less glamorous than it sounds, I assure you) it's time to start working for someone other than mom and dad.

Get a license: When you're talking independence, no step is quite as monumental as setting out on the open road. Want to make the experience extra empowering? Make them pay for part (or all) of their vehicle purchase, teach them to negotiate the price, ensure they are covering maintenance and completing all the legal paperwork themselves.

Own your finances: As your kids get ready to enter the real world, they should be doing more than managing a mini-budget. Let them take control of their finances completely. Transfer money to make them pay for their own extracurriculars, get them into good savings habits (including retirement) and have them take charge on paying some of the household bills (and if they incur late fees, make them foot the bill).

Remember: Even though they may be on the verge of adulthood, they aren't all the way grown yet. As frustrating as it may be to see them make simple mistakes, keep in mind that it's better for them to blunder big-time at home than out in the real world.

Data Master: Steve Burdick



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Toddler With Down Syndrome Sings Duet

Let's face it. Navigating this world can be stressful and draining. But every so often, something grabs our attention and reminds us that life can honestly be as simple and beautiful as we make it. Take, for example, this darling video of a toddler with Down syndrome singing "You Are My Sunshine" with his older sister, Lydia. His name is Bo Gray.

According to Us Weekly, the kids' mom, Amanda Bowman Gray, posted the now-viral heartwarming sing-along video on her Facebook page on Monday with an inspiring message about the benefits of music therapy.

"My daughter Lydia was watching Bo while I was in the shower. Came out to this," she wrote. "If she didn't have a guitar I don't know if she would know how to babysit him. This is her go to. It's proof that music therapy works. Bo is 25 months old and has a 12-word vocabulary. Every word he has learned has been through music and singing."

We're not crying, you're crying.

Aside from being straight-up adorable, Bowman Gray's video is also an inspiration — and a testament to the power of music. A study conducted for the National Center for Biotechnology Information found that listening to music can have a profound impact on children with delayed speech development by introducing them to words, patterns and repetition. Additionally, listening to music can help reduce stress and calm children's nerves while also improving social and communication skills. Though there are many music therapy centers across the country, Gray's Facebook post is a reminder that there are plenty of ways families can introduce the benefits of music, singing and dance at home.

Plus, music is an excellent way for children of all ages to bond.

As Us Weekly notes, Bowman Gray recently shared a 2016 video of her and her husband singing "You Are My Sunshine" to infant Bo when he was hospitalized following intensive heart surgery. The song, she wrote in a Facebook post, became a way for Bowman Gray and her husband, Caleb, to bond with their son and was soon dubbed his "theme song."

If little Bo grows up to be anything like his parents and big sister, he's going to be quite musically talented.

Data Master: Alyssa Hollingsworth

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How to Use a Foam Roller in Your Workout

The deeper you get into your workout routine, the more you reap the rewards — and ahem — the aches and pains, especially if you lean toward a more strenuous approach to exercise — say with running, boxing, high-intensity interval training or CrossFit — you might wake up the next day tight and sore. As any fitness professional or trainer will tell you, prioritizing rest is just as important as making the effort to work up a sweat. One effective way to ensure you're giving your body the TLC it not only needs but craves is by using a foam roller.

Even if you've seen some buddies use one of these or you've read about their miracle-working wonders, the sight of one might be a tad intimidating. Before you walk away and subject yourself to a sensitive neck or uncomfortable shoulders after arm day, take it from these pros, who explain how super-simple these stretching accessories can be. What is a foam roller?

Nah, it's not what your grandma puts in her hair before she sleeps. Fitness influencer and enthusiast Brian Mazza explains foam rollers are an inexpensive, versatile piece of equipment that helps you work out the knots in your muscles while giving yourself a deep tissue massage.

"You can use it to loosen up areas that are tight like your outer thigh, quadriceps and upper back," he tells SheKnows. "You can also enhance your planks with it, build your balance and strengthen your core, safely crack your back and more."

When you spot them in the gym or at your beloved boutique fitness studio, you'll notice they come in all shapes and sizes. As fitness expert Hans David Rearick adds, a variety of brands offer these cylindrical tools anywhere from 12 inches to 24 inches in length and between 6 and 8 inches in diameter. Some are smooth, while others are more jagged, and the higher-tech ones have vibration modes. While you can get started with a single one, those who swear by them might have a variety at home to target everything from their legs and buttocks to their arms and neck.

Why are they important to your routine?

With most workouts, the goal is to get your heart pumping, your blood flowing and your muscles working. Not only does consistent exercise help you maintain your weight, but it helps to manage your level of happiness by constantly circulating endorphins.

All of this sweat is great for your mind and body, but it can cause fatigue when you stay consistent with your routine. That's where foam rollers come in handy. As Mazza explains, "they help increase blood flow throughout the body, help with better movement and increased range of motion."

And if you intend to stay active for, say, as long as you can, Mazza adds they also help decrease your chance of injury because you're properly stretched out after each workout. This means you can keep going for longer and won't have to take as long to recover between sessions.

Even if you think your go-to stretching moves are enough, Dana Morrissey, fitness expert and fascial stretch specialist, says it's

not enough to provide relief for those who are generally very tight post-sweat. Sometimes, it can even do damage.

"Muscles can be either too short [or] too long — when something feels tight, it can certainly be because of the latter. Stretching what is already on stretch can lead to strains and tears," she explains. "Even for those who aren't flexible, a foam roller can help get to those places self-stretching cannot. While the jury is still out on how the science exactly works, proponents of foam rolling report less muscle soreness, less tension and better flexibility following rolling."

How to use a foam roller

Ready to give it a roll? Awesome. Just remember, you don't have to spend a lot of time applying your weight on the foam roller, Morrissey explains. "Thirty to 45 seconds on each body part you want to work on is enough time to make a change. All exercises below are to be done in this time frame. Overdoing it can create pain, and as always, if something doesn't feel right, stop immediately," she recommends.

Save a little time at the end of your next visit to the gym and try out these beginner-approved moves that might make you a believer.

For a tight upper back:

No matter what type of fitness routine you prefer — including softer movements, like yoga or Pilates — you're bound to experience upper-back pain after you really put in the extra effort. Morrissey says this area is one of the most important to focus on, especially to keep your spine healthy over time. Begin in a seated position with your knees bent and your feet on the floor, bringing them as close to your bum as you can. Then, place the roller under the middle of both your shoulder blades as you interlace your fingers behind your head and draw your elbows toward the ceiling.

"Press your weight into your feet and lift your butt into a hover. Begin to roll small sections of the upper back at a time, again just an inch or 2, for 30 to 45 seconds," she says. If you're uncomfortable here, you can also try this same movement against a wall for less intensity.

Once you've finished with that area, she says to sit back down, keeping your upper back on the roller and side-bend at your waist left and right as your upper back is on the roller for 30 to 45 seconds. "Repeat the same sequence, doing one or two more spots down the back, but stop at the bottom of the bra line/rib wall area. It's not ideal to do full-body weighted movements on this area of the ribs as they are floating," she adds.

So, after your next workout, instead of complaining about sore muscles, you might want to try a foam roller as a way to help your recovery and soothe any aches.

Data Master: Alyssa Hollingsworth

Is There a Humane Way to Cook Lobsters?



The common culinary practice of throwing live lobsters into boiling water to cook them has been thrown out the window — in Switzerland, at least. On Wednesday, Jan. 10, the Swiss government effectively banned the boiling water method and ruled that lobsters must be stunned before boiling.

This ruling, which takes effect March 1, comes amid scientific evidence and concern from animal rights advocates that lobsters are able to feel pain.

According to PETA, lobsters have a sophisticated nervous system. Invertebrate zoologist Jaren G. Horsley tells them, “The lobster does not have an automatic nervous system that puts it into a state of shock when it is harmed. It probably feels itself being cut... As an invertebrate zoologist who has studied crustaceans for a number of years, I can tell you the lobster has a rather sophisticated nervous system that, among other things, allows it to sense actions that will cause it harm. [Lobsters] can, I am sure, sense pain.”

So, what’s the most humane way to kill a lobster?

First, let’s define humane slaughter. According to the Humane Slaughter Association, it is as follows: “As with mammals, a humane slaughter is one that results in an immediate loss of consciousness, or if slow-acting, induces unconsciousness without discomfort or pain. This unconsciousness should persist until death intervenes.”

Once the new rule takes effect, only electric shock or the “mechanical destruction” of the lobster’s brain will be accepted methods of stunning the animals, according to Swiss public broadcaster Radio Télévision Suisse and the Humane Slaughter Association. Once you stun the lobster, it’s recommended you kill it immediately.

If you want to humanely cook your lobster at home, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Australia has created step-by-step instructions that can be found here.

Another option is using the aquatic fish anesthetic AQUI-S. According to studies, this kills lobsters without causing pain or distress.

With so many options for humane ways to cook a lobster, it seems crazy to keep utilizing such a cruel cooking method. Let’s hope other countries follow in Switzerland’s footsteps and ban the inhumane act of boiling live lobsters.

Data Master: Eric Peachy

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Are Sports Drinks a Good Option for Illness-Related Dehydration?

Growing up, we always had a "flu kit" of sorts at the ready in case someone had a stomach or digestive issue. It primarily consisted of Saltine crackers, ginger ale, plenty of toilet paper and assorted sports drinks. Given that I am not from a family of natural athletes, the sports drinks were used exclusively for when people got sick with the thought that when you're losing fluids via vomiting or diarrhea, it's best to replenish them with a beverage that comes complete with electrolytes (which commercials told us were necessary).

Now, a pharmacy professor suggests rethinking that strategy because sports drinks aren't the best option for illness-related dehydration. Turns out there is too much sugar, but not enough salt and potassium in drinks like Gatorade and Powerade, John D. Bowman, a pharmacy professor at Texas A&M Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy, says in a statement.

"Sports beverages may be fine for healthy persons following intensive exercise, but they are not recommended for those with fever, diarrhea or vomiting," he explains. But this is something we've known for a while. Why is it so important to bring it up right now?

There are actually two reasons. First, while seasonal influenza (aka the flu) is not usually associated with diarrhea, one of the prominent strains this year does in fact feature this symptom.

"Children and older people are at greater risk of severe symptoms from dehydration, and using sports beverages, chicken soup or other home remedies may actually worsen the illness," Bowman adds.

Secondly, there is a shortage of intravenous fluids because Puerto Rico — a major manufacturing hub for medical supplies — was recently ravaged by Hurricane Maria, so traditional IV treatment for the flu isn't an option in a lot of cases, and hospitals have been increasingly turning to sports drinks as a replacement.

So if you find yourself with diarrhea or other dehydration related to the flu, what should you do? Bowman suggests the oral rehydration salts solution — a treatment for intestinal flu-related dehydration recommended by the World Health Organization that has ingredients you may have at home right now.

To make ORS, combine 1 quart of water, a half-teaspoon of salt and 6 level teaspoons of sugar. You can also add a half-cup of orange juice or a mashed banana for potassium. According to Bowman, the ORS solution is a scientifically sound method of body fluid loss replacement developed for use in places where cholera or other diarrheal diseases are common.

It's also not too late to get the flu shot — so if you haven't done that yet, get to it stat. If you've caught the flu already, a doctor may be able to prescribe antiviral drugs like Tamiflu — but only if you are diagnosed early, as it's most effective when taken within the first or second day of the flu. Also, be aware that even if you don't have diarrhea but are sick with a respiratory illness, you can still get dehydrated.

"What people call the stomach flu is not the same as the respiratory flu, but both can result in dehydration, which makes one feel worse," Bowman clarifies. "The use of oral rehydration is a general recommendation for any ill person with mild to moderate dehydration, and its use might delay or even prevent the need for acute care."

In any case, dehydration is not something to mess with, so if it gets serious, it's best to see your doctor.

Data Master: Nikki Hamilton

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How to Dress According to Your Skin Tone & Hair Color

We'll cut to the chase — picking out clothes is tough. From figuring out what's flattering for your body type to deciding which denim cut works best for your legs, it's basically a part-time job. Even though these clothing guidelines and suggestions can seem overwhelming at first, they're sure to help ease your shopping and dressing process. Today we're talking about which colors will work best according to your skin tone and hair color. We're moving on from old-school color rules like "redheads shouldn't wear red" or "blondes shouldn't wear yellow," because let's get real, those color combos can be pure gold.

Below, we break down various different skin tones, the most common hair colors associated with those skin tones and which clothing colors will complement them. We also asked Siobhán Quinlan, creative director of New York's Art + Autonomy salon, for some insider tips. But before you dive into figuring out the color of this week's outfit, step one is figuring out your skin undertone.

Finding your skin undertone

An undertone is the complexion of your skin, and most people fall in one of three categories: cool, warm and neutral. Understanding your undertone can help you discover the best shades of color to wear.

Color check: Look for specific colors that stand out in your skin. Warm-toned skin has yellow, peach and gold tints, while cool-toned skin has more pink, red or blue.

Look at your wrist: Look at your veins. If you see blue or purple veins, you're most likely cool-toned, and if you see green, you're warm.

Look at your eyes: "Does their eye have golden flecks? They will look better with something warmer. Does their eye have blue or gray flecks? Then I will probably suggest something cooler," says Quinlan. Generally, cool-toned people have blue, gray or green eyes, and warm-toned people have brown, hazel or amber eyes.

Look at your hair: Look at your natural hair — cool tones will have silver or ash undertones and warm tones will have red, orange or yellow undertones.

Celebrity match: Look for a celebrity who has similar skin tone to you and see if you both have cool or warm tones. You can also see how a hair color or a color looks on them and if you like it.

Now, what if you don't identify any of those consistently or feel in the middle? You're probably a neutral skin tone, which means you can wear either cool or warm tones — go, you!

Some general color guidelines based on your skin undertone are:

Warm undertones look better in gold jewelry, whereas cool undertones look great in silver jewelry.

Generally, warmer colors (like red, orange and yellow) look flattering on warmer skin tones and cooler colors (like blue, green and purple) look flattering on cool skin tones.

Look for colors with the same undertone — if you're cool-toned, find a red with a blue-ish/deeper base, and if you're warm-toned, look for warmer brick reds.

Very fair

Cool tone: Julianne Hough | Warm tone: Taylor Swift

Best hair colors include: platinum, ice/silver blond, red, ashy blond, champagne, gold, honey

Best colors to wear: neutrals, pastels, jewel tones

"Something too dark or light (in hair or clothing) can sometimes feel harsh for everyday," says Quinlan. "I tend to advise my clients to stay away from those extremes unless they are really going for more of a 'look.'" You can add subtle contrast with darker neutral colors and jewel tones.

Fair

Cool tone: Emma Stone | Warm tone: Blake Lively

Best hair colors include: red, dirty blond, golden blond, light brown, butterscotch, strawberry blond

Best colors to wear: lavender, sea-foam green, blush, soft yellow, mint green, coral, ivory, peach

Medium

Cool tone: Penélope Cruz | Warm tone: Jessica Alba

Best hair colors include: golden brown, caramel, ash brown, dark brown

Best colors to wear: olive, purple, mustard, cranberry, forest green, royal blue, pink

Medium skin tones can wear darker, bolder colors without washing them out.

Olive

Cool tone: Rosario Dawson | Warm tone: Jennifer Lopez

Best hair colors include: golden blond/brown, caramel, chocolate brown

Best colors to wear: earth tones, green, orange, olive, blue, navy, pink, emerald, burgundy

Dark

Cool tone: Kerry Washington | Warm tone: Beyoncé

Best hair colors include: espresso, jet black, honey blond (for warm tones)

Best colors to wear: jewel tones, plum, white, orange, pink, yellow, ruby

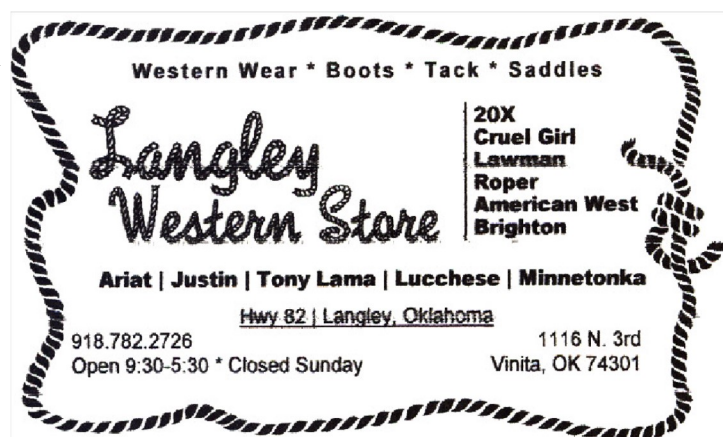
Deep

Cool tone: Lupita Nyong'o | Warm tone: Viola Davis

Best hair colors include: jet black

Best colors to wear: jewel tones, white, fuchsia, yellow, royal blue, blush

Data Master: Nikki Hamilton









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TOPS #567 meet every Thursday at 10am 433 N Mississippi in Nowata.

TOPS #506 in Miami Heavenly Winds Worship Center meet every 6pm Monday evening. For more info call Susan Walls at 918-540-0570

Every 4th Saturday of the month Veteran's Support Group: Veteran sfor Veterans. Have you served in the military? Are you struggling with readjustment? Anxious about the future? Struggling to connect with friends and family? Struggling with school? WE CAN HELP! Free veterans support group at 10am every 4th Saturday of the month. The Landing 502 West Corner Fairland, Ok. For more information call Larry Boyd (918) 541-7592 or Cindy (918) 676-3228.

Feb 09, 2018 to Feb 18, 2018 Broken Arrow Community Playhouse presents: The Comedy of Errors Come see "The Comedy of Errors," one of Shakespeare's early and most uproarious comedies, live onstage at the Broken Arrow Community Playhouse. This farcical play tells the story of two sets of identical twins separated at birth. Antipholus of Syracuse and his servant, Dromio, arrive in Ephesus which turns out to be the home of their twin brothers of the same names. What follows is a series of wild mishaps based on mistaken identities that will leave you in stitches. You won't want to miss this hilarious production at the Broken Arrow Community Playhouse. Broken Arrow Community Playhouse 1800 S Main St Broken Arrow, OK 74012 Phone: 918-258-0077

Feb 09, 2018 to Feb 11, 2018 Sooner Nationals Head to Tulsa's Expo Square for a fun and exciting weekend of intense BMX competition. The Sooner Nationals feature events for men and women of all age groups and skill levels. The number one winners will be decided on Saturday with the runner-up events on Sunday. Be sure to come out for the pre-race on Friday and see the racers prepare for the big event. There will be plenty of concessions and no shortage of exhilarating races to watch, so come out and cheer on these talented riders. Event schedules and registration fees available on website. Tulsa Expo Square 4145 E 21st St Tulsa, OK 74114 Phone: 602-625-3051 Phone: 918-744-1113

Feb 09, 2018 to Feb 11, 2018 Home & Garden Show Visit the annual Home & Garden Show in Grove for new ideas and products to improve your home or garden. Browse nearly 100 vendor booths filled with a wide selection of useful products, and attend one of the how-to seminars. Talk to area contractors at the Home & Garden show, then check out the latest in home im-

provements, decorating ideas, landscaping and remodeling tips. The Home & Garden Show in Grove also offers cooking demonstrations so visitors can either brush up on their cooking skills or learn new tricks in the kitchen. Grove Civic Center 1720 S Main Grove, OK 74344 Phone: 918-786-9079 Fax: 918-786-2909

Feb 10, 2018 Pedro the Lion in Concert Pedro the Lion fans can catch this indie rock artist live as he makes a comeback at the Vanguard in Tulsa. Eleven years after their breakup, gather near the stage, or watch Pedro the Lion from the balcony, and sing along as lead singer David Bazan delivers a mix of tracks off his four full albums and five EPs. Listen close as Pedro the Lion sings some of their most popular tunes live, from "Options" and "A Mind of Her Own" to "Bad Diary Days" and "Bands with Managers." The Vanguard 222 N Main St Tulsa, OK 74103 Phone: 918-561-6885

Feb 10, 2018 Eagle Tour & Loon Watch Come to the Sequoyah National Wildlife Refuge and see southern bald eagles in their natural habitat. You will begin the tour by watching eagles from the refuge's webcam before taking off on the 25-person tour bus. Guests are encouraged to bring binoculars. Stops will be made at two nesting sites as well as other points of interest where eagles frequently appear. Two spotting scopes will be provided for a close-up look at these incredible birds. After spending the morning at the refuge, take a break and have a leisurely lunch in Vian. Then, make your way to Tenkiller State Park's Driftwood Nature Center to continue your bird-watching adventure with more eagles and lots of loons, including the common loon, the red-throated loon, the pacific loon and the yellow-billed loon. Come out and catch sight of this famed bird of the northeast and beyond. Tours will occur unless there is a travel advisory for the area. Sequoyah National Wildlife Refuge & Tenkiller State Park Vian, OK 74962

Phone: 918-489-5641 Phone: 918-489-5025 Fax: 918-489-2111
Feb 10, 2018 River Spirit Casino Resort presents: Jim Gaffigan Get ready to laugh as Jim Gaffigan brings his sidesplitting brand of observational humor to Paradise Cove at the River Spirit Casino Resort in Tulsa. This Grammy Award-nominated comedian, actor, writer and producer is known around the world for his unique brand of comedy which largely revolves around fatherhood and his observations on everyday life. Come see the comedian the A.V. Club calls "one of our most intelligent observational humorists" at this can't-miss comedy event in Tulsa. Paradise Cove 8330 Riverside Pkwy Tulsa, OK 74137

Feb 10, 2018 to Feb 11, 2018 Greater Tulsa Survival & Green Living Expo Prepare for the unexpected with a trip to the Greater Tulsa Survival & Green Living Expo. Held at Tulsa Expo

Square, the Exchange Center will transform into a one-stop shop for long-term food storage, solar power, bug-out kits and tactical gear. Stock up and be ready to survive without power after a visit to this survival expo in Tulsa. Tulsa Expo Square 4145 E 21st St Tulsa, OK 74114 Phone: 563-927-8176 Phone: 563-927-8207

Feb 10, 2018 to Feb 11, 2018 Great Train Show Head to the Tulsa Expo Square for the beloved traveling Great Train Show. If you're a train enthusiast or just love learning new things, this show is an entertaining exhibition of all things locomotive. The show will feature operating train models, train dealers, collectors, hands-on exhibits, demonstrations, workshops and more. Bring the whole family out for this fun and educational event. Tulsa Expo Square 4145 E 21 St Tulsa, OK 74114 Phone: 630-608-4988

Feb 10, 2018 to Feb 11, 2018 Tulsa Women's Expo Head to the River Spirit Expo at Tulsa's Expo Square for the Women's Living Expo. This event will be packed with an incredible variety of exhibits to browse, people to see and products to try. Over 200 exhibits will be set up for browsing as well as runway fashion shows and experts in a variety of areas like health, fitness, beauty, fashion, finance, food and entertaining, and more. There will be notable stylists that will be available to cut and style your hair and demonstrate all kinds of new beauty products. Make sure to plan ahead so you can fit everything in at this exciting event. Tulsa Expo Square 4145 E 21st St Tulsa, OK 74114 Phone: 203-259-3351 Fax: 203-259-3354

Feb 15, 2018 Blake Shelton in Concert Tulsa's BOK Center welcomes award-winning entertainer Blake Shelton to the stage for an unforgettable night of music. The Oklahoma native brings his Country Music Freaks tour to Tulsa on the heels of his latest album, *Texoma Shore*, which debuted at number four on the US Billboard 200 charts. Shelton will be performing with special guest Trace Adkins, along with openers Brett Eldredge and Carly Pearce. Come sing along with hits like "Ol' Red," "Austin" and "Honey Bee" at this can't-miss performance at the BOK Center in Tulsa. BOK Center 200 S Denver Tulsa, OK 74103 Phone: 918-894-4445

Feb 15, 2018 Tulsa Performing Arts Center presents: James Ehnes Come to the John H. Williams Theater at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center for a lecture by renowned violinist James Ehnes. Having established himself as one of the foremost violinists of his generation, Ehnes is gifted with a rare combination of stunning virtuosity, serene lyricism and an unfaltering musicality, making him a favorite guest of many of the world's most respected conductors including Vladimir Ashkenazy, Marin Alsop, Sir Andrew Davis and more. Don't miss this stirring presentation by a violin virtuoso as part of the President's Performing Arts & Lecture Series at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center. 110 E 2nd St Tulsa, OK 74103 Phone: 918-596-7122

Feb 15, 2018 to Feb 18, 2018 State Fiddlers Winter Convention Visitors to the State Fiddlers Winter Festival will enjoy live music performed by professional fiddle players along with daily and evening dances. Formerly known as the Western Hills Fiddlers Festival, some of Oklahoma's best fiddle players will be on-hand at this annual event. Come for a weekend filled with fiddling, dancing and musical workshops. Jam sessions will be held throughout the event in the hotel lobby. Come and celebrate American folk music, bluegrass and Western swing and stick around for all that Sequoyah State Park has to offer. Sequoyah Lodge 19808 Park 10 Wagoner, OK 74441 Phone: 918-772-2545 Toll Free: 800-368-1486

Feb 16, 2018 to Feb 18, 2018 Vintage Tulsa Show Some of the finest vintage and antique dealers in the nation are headed to Tulsa Expo Square to present their wares at the Vintage Tulsa

Show. More than 55,000 square feet of merchandise will be set up at this show to the delight of antique and vintage lovers. Browse row after row of unique goods in a climate-controlled space with concessions available. From antique furniture and collectibles to vintage clothing and linens, find it all at the Vintage Tulsa Show. Tulsa Expo Square 4145 E 21st St Tulsa, OK 74112 Phone: 918-619-2875

Feb 16, 2018 to Feb 18, 2018 Darryl Starbird's National Rod & Custom Car Show The Darryl Starbird's National Rod & Custom Car Show at the Tulsa Expo Square is a can't miss for automobile lovers. With over 1,000 entries, this car show is a highly competitive and full of astonishing classic and custom cars from across the nation. Spend hours browsing through all of the stunning cars and be sure to hang around for the awards where the "Fine Nine" top cars will take their titles and one car will win the "Go for the Gold" cash award. Don't miss this one-of-a-kind car show with a legend. Tulsa Expo Square 4145 E 21st St Tulsa, OK 74114 Phone: 918-257-4235 4145 E 21st St Tulsa, OK 74114 Phone: 918-342-5357 Phone: 417-863-6353

Feb 16, 2018 to Feb 18, 2018 Midsouth Tackle, Hunting & Boat Show Come to Grove in northeastern Oklahoma for the Midsouth Tackle & Hunting Show. This event will feature hundreds of vendors presenting the latest merchandise and technologies in outdoor sports with special hunting and fishing demonstrations by pro fishermen and hunters. This expo will also include a kids' fishing pond, the Fetch-N-Fish dog show, bowfishing, archery and more. Spend the day browsing vendor booths filled with retail hunting and fishing supplies, camping gear, lures, boating accessories and outdoor apparel for men and women. Peruse new boats, RVs or ATVs on display and talk to local lake associations, outfitters and fishing clubs to find new fishing hot spots. Bring the family and celebrate the great outdoors at the Midsouth Tackle & Hunting Show. Grove Civic Center 1702 Main St Grove, OK 74344 Phone: 918-520-3474

Feb 17, 2018 Tulsa Opera presents: The Stars Align Come see world-famous opera star Susan Graham in a rousing production of *The Stars Align* at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center. Graham is a mezzo-soprano with one of the most commanding voices in opera today, and she will be joined onstage by soprano Sarah Coburn along with tenors Aaron Blake and David Portillio. The opera will be conducted by Oklahoma native Timothy Long, who has held faculty positions at the Yale School of Music and The Juilliard School. Come to the Chapman Music Hall inside the Tulsa Performing Arts Center for a night at the opera you won't soon forget. Tulsa Performing Arts Center 110 E 2nd St Tulsa, OK 74103 Phone: 918-587-4811

Phone: 918-582-4035 Fax: 918-592-0380

Feb 17, 2018 to Feb 18, 2018 Rogers Country Spring Horse Show The Rogers County Spring Horse Show brings horse enthusiasts, riders and a wide variety of breeds to the Claremore Expo Center in Claremore. Come see the cowboys and cowgirls compete in several events like barrel racing and take in the pageantry for yourself during this two day show that is fun for everyone. Claremore Expo Center

400 Veterans Pkwy Claremore, OK 74017 Phone: 918-341-8688

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How to Tell if You Have a Common Cold or a Full-Blown Case of the Flu

It's not hard to tell when you're sick. You're tired, your nose is runny and you feel like crap in general. But while the signs you are coming down with something are obvious, most of the time it's not so easy to tell if you just have a common cold — or if you have a more serious case of the flu.

Here's the deal with the two similar — yet at the same time very different — illnesses.

So which one do I have?

Sneezing, coughing, sore throat and body aches are all symptoms of both a cold and the flu, and unfortunately, there's no hard and fast way to determine which virus you are infected with.

"There isn't a reliable test out there to confirm whether you have the flu," says Dr. David Farman, an emergency medicine physician at Hendricks Regional Health in Danville, Indiana. "The nasal swabs done by physicians are really only about 50 percent sensitive for picking up cases of influenza."

So then how the heck are you supposed to know which one you have? If your symptoms don't start getting better after about a week, it's possible you have the flu. Severity of the symptoms is also another giveaway.

"Fever, body aches, rapid heart rate, cough, headache and the feeling that you've been hit by a truck are harbingers of the flu," says Farman.

Another way to tell the difference between the two illnesses is how quickly the symptoms come on. While cold symptoms tend to creep up a little at a time, the flu tends to come on a lot quicker, according to WebMD.

The reason the common cold and the seasonal flu are hard to tell apart might be the fact that they share a lot of similarities: They're both caused by viruses, they're both respiratory illnesses and they — along with most other illnesses — can cause your heart to be a little faster than normal (The heart functions differently when the body is fighting an infection, according to MD Health, but if your resting heart rate ever rises above 85, see your doctor immediately).

Seeking treatment

We all know that there's not much to be done for a cold other than wait it out, but if your symptoms are unbearable and seem to be getting worse, hit up your doctor for a prescription.

"If you have the right symptoms in the right season, and you present within 48 hours of symptom onset, a course of Tamiflu could be in order," Farman says. "Tamiflu is an antiviral that shortens the duration of your influenza. For example, if taken properly, it can decrease your miserable week to a mere five days."

And don't wait. The flu is no joke and can lead to pneumonia and hospitalization. As for that nasty cold? Homeopathic remedies are your best bet.

Melinda Johnson, the director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics and a clinical assistant professor for the Nutrition Program at Arizona State University, recommends good old-fashioned vitamin C and zinc to shorten the duration of a cold.

"But vitamin C supplements only seem to be helpful if taken before the cold symptoms start, which can be tricky to time," Johnson writes in U.S. News. "If you know you have been exposed to the cold virus, go ahead and take a vitamin C supplement for a few days. Zinc, meanwhile, is shown to be most effective when taken at the first signs of getting a cold. Zinc lozenges can be a useful way to get some zinc and soothe a sore throat at the same time. It's important to note that taking too much vitamin C or zinc can be counterproductive or even dangerous; for example, the use of zinc products inside the nose (like with a spray) can cause a loss of smell."

Johnson also says honey is great for helping to get rid of a lingering cough.

"(A study found) that adding honey to coffee was more effective in treating adults' post-cold coughs than taking a steroid," she writes.

Prevention

The flu may be more hardcore, but you actually have a better shot at preventing the flu than you do the common cold. Because, well, vaccines.

- Here are the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's other recommendations for avoiding getting or spreading the flu:
- Avoid close contact with those who are sick
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your mouth and nose to prevent others from getting sick
- Wash your hands often
- Avoid touching your nose, eyes and mouth
- Practice good health habits, like getting enough sleep, staying physically active, managing stress, staying hydrated and following a healthy diet

On the other hand, there is no vaccination for the common cold. For your best bet at keeping a cold at bay, use the common sense listed above: Wash your hands frequently and avoid contact with sick people.

Data Master Cody Welch



Library News

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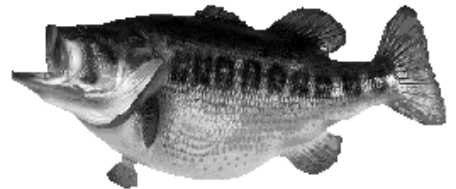
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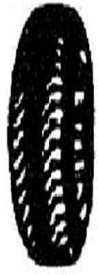
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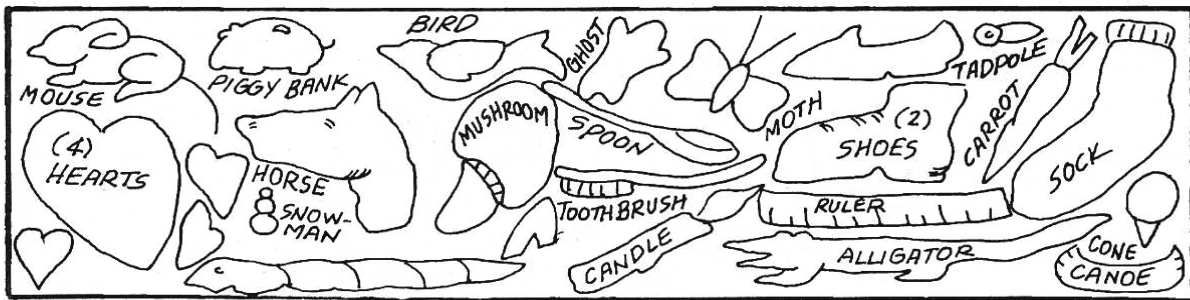
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Your Cat Sleeping in the Litter Box Could Be the Sign of a Serious Problem



Cats display all kinds of unusual behavior that to the new cat owner might seem confusing or even worrisome. One of these classic but weird behaviors is sleeping in the litter box.

Sleeping in your own toilet is pretty disgusting — and considering cats are so obsessed with keeping clean, it's super-confusing they would choose the litter box as a place to take a nap.

Our own precious cats would never dream of such grossness, until, that is, we uprooted them from their home. Yup, we tried to make switching to a new apartment as stress-free as possible, but moving sent our cat Bill straight for the litter box.

And he didn't even have to pee.

This litter box hiding lasted for days. At first, he wouldn't even come out to eat — we had to leave food next to the box, and he'd take a few bites while he was still sitting inside it. However, after a few days and a lot of attention, he started venturing out into his new space.

The stress factor

According to our vet at Prospect Animal Hospital, sleeping and hiding in the litter box is a common reaction in cats to any overly stressful situation. While it may seem gross to the pet owner, a cat's litter box may feel like the only safe haven in new surroundings because it smells like it does. According to Susan Paretts of The Nest, "cats actually mark their territory with their urine and its scent can sometimes be comforting to an anxious cat."

Cats also hide in litter boxes for the same reason they hide in cardboard boxes — the smaller, enclosed space feels like added protection. Mychelle Blake, MSW, CDBC and expert for the Pet Health Network, told SheKnows, "This is why if you visit an animal shelter, you will often see cats in their kennels lying in their litter boxes."

If you've recently adopted another pet (especially a cat), your cat may sleep in its litter box as an act of claiming it. Cats are very territorial, and if another animal threatens their space, they'll act out in order to assert dominance.

Remedy: If your cat's feeling threatened by another ani-

mal, make sure there are as many litter boxes around as there are felines. If you have a dog, make sure the litter box is out of the way, so the cat doesn't feel like it has to sneak by the dog every time it wants to use it. You can also use pheromone sprays and diffusers around the litter boxes to alleviate stress.

Urinary problem

Sleeping in the litter box can also be the sign of something more serious, so you want to be sure and monitor your cat closely if it suddenly starts doing it. Dr. Celeste Clements, DVM, DACVIM, told SheKnows, "If the cat's behavior is unusual or changed in other ways, including lack of appetite or thirst, or possibly increased thirst, or if you note a change in the pet's social interactions, or that he or she is sleeping more, or seeming to have difficulty moving about when removed from the box, then a more serious condition or illness might be present."

This could be indicative of any number of illnesses, not just ones having to do with elimination. However, if you notice your cat (particularly if it's male) sitting or squatting in its litter box for long periods of time, scratching at the litter but producing no urine, it may have a lower urinary tract disease. According to Animal Planet, male cats can develop crystals in their urine that if left untreated, could block their ability to pass urine completely. Full blockage like this could be fatal in only 48 hours, so if you notice your cat straining to urinate more than once, take it to the vet immediately.

That being said, you shouldn't jump to the worst case scenario if your cat suddenly starts sleeping in its litter box. Just keep a close eye on it and if other unusual behaviors, like the ones listed above, start to develop, you should definitely give your vet a call.

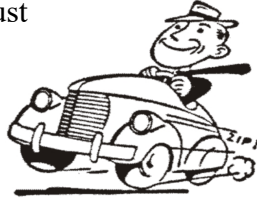
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Does Comfort Food Really Help You Feel Better?

Can the food you eat actually have an effect on your mood? What about comfort food? You know what we're talking about here — Mom's chicken soup, a heaping bowl of ice cream or mashed potatoes and gravy. Food impacts our lives in more ways than one, but is there really anything to the notion that comfort foods happy us up? Let's find out.

What are comfort foods?

When you say "comfort food," this can mean different things to different people. Often, comfort foods are firmly tied to nostalgia and can be traced back to childhood. For some, they're hearty, home-cooked foods, and for others, they're sweets or other snacks. Many times, these foods are loaded with carbs, sugar or fat, so they're not always the healthiest choices, but if you think they make you feel better, then it seems like a good idea to go ahead and dig in.

Do these foods really make you feel better, though?

Thankfully, there have been research studies on the very topic of comfort foods and mood. A study out of the University of Minnesota, for example, found that while people may be driven to comfort food in hopes it will improve their mood, these particular foods don't seem to make a difference when compared to other options.

Additionally, while comfort foods, especially those of the sugary sort, can trigger the release of dopamine (the brain's pleasure hormone), this mood boost does not last according to Rachel Kelly, author of *The Happiness Diet: Good Mood Food*. "The immediate high we feel when eating sugary things might help to relieve anxiety temporarily, but we soon experience a crash as our blood-sugar levels drop suddenly," Kelly tells SheKnows.

She also notes there are differences between comfort eating and eating for hunger, as comfort eating usually comes on suddenly and often involves specific cravings for sugar or carbs. Physical hunger, instead, comes on gradually and doesn't feel as urgent, and when you eat for hunger, you eat until you are full and feel satisfied.

"By contrast, with comfort eating, you don't respond to normal feelings of fullness, but keep on eating and often feel guilty afterwards," Kelly explains. She says this is another solid reason comfort eating generally does not improve our mood long-term and can leave us feeling pretty crummy when all is said and done.

Give your comfort food a health boost

Instead of diving in to your old-favorite dishes or snacks (that you have to admit probably aren't all that great for you) when you're feeling blue, you can instead make some swaps so it doesn't take such a toll on your mood (and your health).

Zucchini, kale, parsnip or sweet potato chips instead of regular chips (but consume them in moderation, as they contain high levels of fat)
Cauliflower rice for white rice

Zucchini or butternut squash noodles or buckwheat noodles instead of pasta

Coconut cream instead of regular cream

Coconut flour, quinoa flour, gram flour made from chickpeas, spelt flour or buckwheat flour instead of white flour in baking

Coconut sugar or maple syrup instead of refined sugar

Dark chocolate or homemade cacao-rich chocolates instead of milk or white chocolate

Cacao, dates, flaxseed, ground almonds, desiccated coconut or almond butter for flavor and consistency in baking

Unsweetened natural yogurt or coconut yogurt with added fruit instead of store-bought fruit yogurts or low-fat desserts

Unsalted butter or coconut oil rather than vegetable oil when baking cakes

So, while comfort foods may make you feel better in the short-term,

it's been found that they really don't make much of a difference psychologically and may actually make you feel worse. Eat comfort foods in moderation if you can't quell the cravings, and make quality substitutions when digging around for your favorite foods — you might just find yourself feeling better about the food choices you're making, which is a win-win.

Data Master: Steve Burdick

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5 Tips for a Clean Pantry



A pantry is a great space for storing kitchen must-haves. It's also a mecca for clutter, dirt and expired food. Clean it out now with these five tips to make the job less of a pain. Cleaning out your pantry might seem like a huge chore, but it's really not that bad (we promise!). Use these tips to get the job done quickly and easily. You'll love the results!

Empty it out

You're never going to get that pantry clean when all the shelves are full of cans and boxes. The first thing you need to do is clean it out. Empty everything (yes, we mean everything) out of pantry and set it all out on your kitchen counters or floor.

Purge

It's easiest to purge while you're emptying your pantry. Nothing you won't use should make it on to your kitchen counter. Instead, put those items in one of these two places:
Trash — Drag your trashcan over to where you're working and start trashing anything that's expired. Depending on how long it's been since the last time you've done this, that might be a lot!
Donate — There's no need to throw out good food, but there's no reason to keep it if you won't use it. Grab a sturdy box and fill it with anything unexpired you know you won't use or anything you have too much of. Your local food pantry will gladly take those extras off your hands.

Scrub

Now that those shelves are gloriously empty, let's get them sparkling clean. You don't want to use any harsh chemicals because this where you store your food. Instead, fill a bowl or small bucket with warm water and a drop or two of dish soap and use that solution to scrub your pantry clean. Use the handheld extension in

your vacuum to make sure the floor and all corners are clear of dirt and crumbs.

Organize

Now that your pantry is clean, you're ready to load it back up. But don't just throw everything in wherever it will fit — there must be a method to your madness! Put items you use every day, like cereals and breads, at eye level, where they're easy to see and reach. Group like items together, so canned fruits and veggies, soups and snacks all have their place. Afraid you won't be able to keep that up? Use a label maker to clearly define everything's new home.

Utilize bins

Small items like seasoning packets and tiny jars tend to get lost in a big pantry. Use baskets and bins to ensure these tiny items all stay together and within reach

Data Master: Steve Burdick

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Scientists Prove (Again) That Flu Shots Keep Kids From Dying



Flu vaccinations can protect a child from death, but some parents are still opting out. The science is more solid than ever. New research from the American Academy of Pediatrics' journal demonstrates that kids who get a flu shot are significantly less likely to die from flu and its complications. The study examined the cases of 358 kids, ages 6 months through 17 years — all of whom died flu-associated deaths between the years of 2010 to 2014. Researchers were able to determine vaccine status for 291 of these deaths, and of the children who died, 74 percent had not received a flu shot.

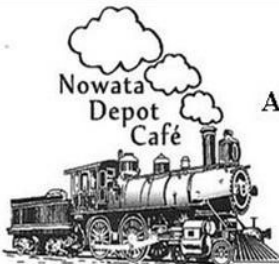
For healthy kids, a flu shot meant reduced risk of flu-associated death by almost two-thirds: 65 percent.

For high-risk kids (with blood disorders, heart disorders or asthma, for instance), a flu shot lowered flu death risk by half.

So what are the CDC guidelines on vaccinating kids against flu? They tend to vary from year to year, but the CDC recommends that all children over the age of 6 months get vaccinated. Keep in mind that the vaccination can take several weeks to hit peak immunity in a child's system, so earlier is better. And if your child is getting vaccinated for the first time, they will most likely require two doses 28 days apart. (Sorry, flu-shot first-timers.)

And even though spring is (supposedly) here, it's not too late to get the flu shot — for you or your child. Better late than never, always, when it comes to protecting yourself and your kids from the flu.

Data Master: Eric Peachy



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The Horrifying Way the U.S. Treats Moms With Postpartum Depression



Recently, new mom Jessica Porten had her first obstetrician appointment since giving birth four months prior — they kept canceling her appointments. She waited for over an hour with her daughter, Kira, until a nurse practitioner finally called her in. When she let the nurse know she was experiencing postpartum depression that was “manifesting in fits of anger” but assured her she’d never hurt herself or her baby — she only wanted to discuss her medication options — the nurse rushed through her pelvic exam, barely spoke of any medication, left the room to “talk to the doctor” about her PPD and instead called the police.

“The cops can clearly see I’m of sound mind... so they allow me to drive to the ER with Kira in my car while one cop drives in front of me and one follows behind,” Porten explains in a now-viral Facebook post that’s already garnered more than 39,000 engagements, more than 32,000 shares and more than 10,000 comments at the time of this writing.

After checking her in, drawing blood and taking a urine sample, the hospital staff removed and locked up all of Porten’s clothes and flip-flops, gave her a pair of socks, and fed her a turkey

sandwich since she’d missed lunch. She wasn’t seen by a social worker until 10:45 p.m.

The social worker ultimately decided that Porten didn’t need to be there nor did she need to be put on a psychiatric hold. The social worker began to process Porten’s discharge.

“Not once during all of this has a doctor laid eyes on me,” she writes. “Not once. Not even before they decided to call the cops on me. The social worker hands me some papers and discusses the information in them, telling me she thinks these ‘will probably be good resources for you.’ I leave the ER at midnight, my spirit more broken than ever, no medication, no follow up appointment, never spoke to a doctor. This was a 10-hour ordeal that I had to go through all while caring for my infant that I had with me. And that’s it. That’s what I got for telling my OB that I have PPD and I need help. I was treated like a criminal and then discharged with nothing but a stack of xeroxed printouts with phone numbers on them... Ladies and gentleman, our healthcare system.”

Porten is not alone in experiencing PPD. Of course, childbirth

affects a woman's hormones immensely, which means it can incite a range of emotions — from elation to fear to anxiety. It's not uncommon for mothers to experience mood swings, anxiety and insomnia after giving birth, especially within the first two weeks post-delivery. In fact, more than one-third of mothers have experienced mental health issues related to parenthood. But for upward of 20 percent of women, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these complications devolve into depression.

PPD can develop anywhere from a few weeks into motherhood to even a year after delivery. It's "a severe, long-lasting form of depression" after childbirth, according to the Mayo Clinic, and it's often exacerbated when women have endured problematic births with potentially traumatic procedures, such as emergency caesareans. Likewise, the recurrence risk is high for women who've struggled with PPD before according to the research published in PLOS Medicine.

Porten's Facebook post doesn't mention whether or not she'd experienced PPD with her firstborn, but the research suggests mothers who've endured PPD with their first child are more likely to experience it again with subsequent births. A team of Danish researchers conducted a study to describe the risk of postpartum affective disorder (an umbrella term that includes PPD and other postpartum conditions such as postpartum psychosis) among women with no prior psychiatric episodes. By compiling data from national registries, they were able to look at a cohort of 457,317 first-time mothers and their subsequent births between 1996 and 2013.

The researchers found that 0.6 percent of births resulted in serious PPD. And after the first year postpartum, 27.9 percent of those women were still in treatment for the disorder; after four years postpartum, that percentage dropped to just 5.4 percent. Moreover, the researchers found that the recurrence risk (or the chances of a woman experiencing PPD again) is quite high — 15 percent for women prescribed antidepressants after their first birth and 21 percent for women who were hospitalized for an affective disorder after their first birth. The risk of PPD after a second birth was 26.9 times higher in women who were prescribed antidepressants after their first birth compared to women who had never had PPD and 46.6 times higher in women who had been hospitalized for depression after their first birth.

These mothers who are at a greater risk of PPD need support — both in understanding their condition and in medically treating those conditions. But many of them don't seek help. And Porten's story shows us why.

A BabyCenter survey of more than 1,400 mothers and pregnant women called attention to the significant number of women who do not get prompt treatment for PPD: 21 percent of the mothers polled said they had either been given a diagnosis of PPD or felt like they might have it, but an overwhelming 40 percent of them did not seek any medical help for the condition. Why? For 30 percent of them, they felt strong enough to "get over" their feelings without a doctor, and 26 percent said they felt their symptoms were not serious enough to warrant a discussion. Meanwhile, 25 percent said they were too embarrassed to admit their feelings, 23 percent said they felt guilty about those feelings, and 16 percent said they did not want to be labeled as "mentally ill."

And most women probably don't want to be escorted to the ER by the police, either — as Porten was. But we live in a culture that

consistently shames both women and mentally ill people of all gender identities, so it's no surprise mothers have these apprehensions.

Porten made an edit to her Facebook post to explain that, while she won't be taking legal action, she does want her message to "spread far and wide so that awareness can be made." She wants to fix what she calls the "broken system."

"The fact of the matter is, even if I was mentally unstable, suicidal, and unfit to parent (which I am not), the way the situation was handled is not helpful," she explains. She also asks the following questions to help crowdsource ideas and hopefully inspire change:

"Why is the way I was treated standard procedure?
"What can we do to improve standard procedures for all postpartum mothers, but also specifically those at a higher risk for developing PPD and presenting with signs of PPD?"

"Who is most qualified to make suggestions for improvements?"

"Who is actually capable of making the changes to standard procedures, and how can we contact them?"

Porten later revised her post to add:

"Why was I let go, when so many others would have been put on a mandatory 72-hour psychiatric hold, and had their children taken away?"

"Why do a disproportionate number of women of color who have PPD not receive the services they need, even when they initiate treatment?"

"Why are a disproportionate number of women of color who have PPD misdiagnosed?"

"Why are black women half as likely to receive mental health treatment and counseling as white women?"

"What can we do as a community to lift up our marginalized members and make sure they receive the quality care that we ALL have a right to!?"

Porten is working with 2020 Mom, the nonprofit host of Federal Maternal Mental Health Lobby Day and a leading advocate for maternal mental health in California. Four bills are currently being introduced, and Porten will be posting the dates, times and locations of #4Bills4CAMoms rallies for anyone who'd like to get involved in the action.

PPD needs to be taken seriously among health care professionals. But for something to be taken seriously, that doesn't mean it's criminal.

Data Master: Nikki Hamilton

Old Age



Old age is one of that life stages which has to be passed by every one and no one can save oneself from this. When an individual enters into an old age than that person really needs emotional support from their children as same as like they have given to their children's in their child hood. They always took care of their children from the day they took birth in this world till the time they remain alive. But the children totally ignore those great people in their life, on the basis of whom they are too success in their life. In the old age when they really need support of their children in their old age, they simply say that they are too busy in their life and they do not have that much time for them.

Let me tell you one story that will definitely change your mind for your thinking and emotions that you have for your parents in their old age.

One day a son after the death of his father decided to left his mom in old age home and keep on visited her after few days.

One day he got a call from old age home that gave him news that you mom is very serious please come on immediate basis. Son immediately went and saw that his mom was in very critical stage; she was about to die on the bed.

He asked to mom; please let me know what should I do for you? Her mom replied please install few fans in the old age home as there is not even a single fan as of now, second install a fridge here so that food can be saved and one should have cold water in summers with provision to save extra food so that same can be saved. She said so many times she slept without food.

In reply to that Son asked; mom you have only few hours left and why you have been asking me now to install these things when you do not need them actually.

Mom replies it is ok dear. I am only securing your future, I've managed heat, summer, pain and hunger but I am afraid that you will not be able to manage these things when your children will left you here in old age home because you had never face this type of situation in your life till now.

When I heard this story, I felt like crying. How come we leave our parents in Old Age home, who always took care and loved us more than any other thing in this world?

My dear friends please read and share with as many as your friends so that me, you and your friends will also take care of their parents. Really touching...

Data Master: Doug Stone

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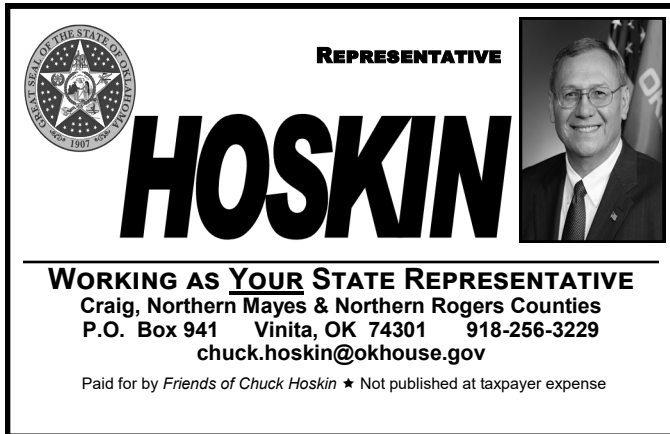
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20th issue: 10th of the same month

Community Links of Chelsea
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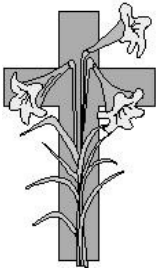


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JEWELS FROM THE WORD

WHAT KIND OF ROSE ARE YOU?

When we moved into this house several years ago, the first thing I wanted to do was plant roses. The existing landscaping was beautiful, but a woman wants to add her personal touch to make the new house her home.

I planted 3 kinds of roses—hybrid tea roses, climbing roses, and miniature roses. Hybrid tea roses are the kind that florists use for long-stemmed roses. I especially love the Mr. Lincoln hybrid tea roses which is a deep, dark red with the scent that roses are known for. Climbing roses are best known for the yearly show of many blooms. The miniature roses might be small, but they make up for it in lovely buds.

Some people are like the hybrid tea rose, which stands out, putting out a fragrance that draws people to them. When they walk into a room, everyone knows it. They don't do it on purpose, but are full of life and definitely one of a kind. They stand out in a crowd.

Some people are like the climbing rose, blooming best surrounded by other people. They are the ones who blend in, making up a bower of blossoms that take your breath away.

The miniature roses represent those who bloom in small ways, just as lovely, but not as showy. Some of them are more beautiful as a bud. We might need to put on our bifocals to see them clearly, because they can be easily missed, but they are every bit as beautiful as the big showy climbing roses and the long-stemmed hybrid tea rose.

Our Lord Jesus has frequently been referred to as the Rose of Sharon. In Song of Solomon 2:1, the Bible says "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." He is the perennial which lives forever.

What kind of rose are you?

Data Master: Alyssa Hollingsworth

Lavon Hightower Lewis Email me at: llewis2138@sbcglobal.net to read more devotionals, go to <http://jewelsfromtheword.com>



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