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March 5, 2018

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Best St. Patrick's Day Bashes in Oklahoma



St. Patrick's Day is a time to celebrate the luck of the Irish with parades, festivals, the clinking of beer glasses and good, old-fashioned frivolity. Whether you're searching for ways to honor your Irish heritage or merely look good in green, Oklahoma has a St. Patrick's Day bash for you. Read on to discover Oklahoma's top Irish pubs, restaurants and even family-friendly options where you can celebrate the legend of St. Patrick in style.

Oklahoma City Metro Area
O'Connell's Irish Pub and The Abner Ale House
- Norman

Located just minutes south of the Oklahoma City metro area, the college town of Norman knows how to throw a St. Patrick's Day bash. At O'Connell's Irish Pub & Grille you'll find a lively atmosphere where anything goes. Karaoke, limitless brew and live music are the staples of this college crowd hotspot, where pints, pitchers and colossal "rockets" of bold

Irish stouts like Guinness or Smithwick's are served up to crowds of party-goers on St. Patrick's Day.

Over at The Abner Ale House, you won't find any green beer, but with over 200 brews available you're sure to find something to satisfy. Head out in the afternoon for live music on the back patio, order the British Isle beer flight, or enjoy the Black Velvet, a smooth mix of Guinness and cider.

Live music, food specials and vendors get the celebration started, while pints of Guinness, glasses of single malt scotch and shots of Irish whiskey keep it going until 2am.

Saints - Oklahoma City

To pay tribute to Irish culture without the rowdy crowds, head to Saints in Oklahoma City. Located in the trendy Plaza District, visitors will be treated to perfectly prepared Irish dishes like lamb and barley stew and the O'Patty loaf sandwich in an upbeat,

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Tulsa Metro Area

Blue Dome St. Patrick's Day Celebration - Tulsa

Tulsa's energetic Blue Dome Entertainment District turns a vibrant shade of green every year when the streets are filled with thousands of spectators sporting the traditional color. Home of longtime Irish favorites Arnie's Bar, Woody's Corner Bar and James E. McNellie's Public House within a few blocks of one another, festival-goers will be treated to enough Irish beer and fare to feed a small army.

Held throughout the entire St. Patrick's Day weekend from morning until night, visitors can pub crawl, browse fun local retailers or enjoy live music all weekend long into the early morning hours. Wander through the five-block radius in the Blue Dome District that will be blocked from traffic and watch as the party spills out onto the streets with tent staging areas and bar stands with rooftop seating. Keep an eye out for McNellie's semi-truck featuring 30 taps and over 100 kegs of beer.

Arnie's Bar - Tulsa

No Tulsa celebration of St. Patrick's would be complete without a visit to Arnie's Bar, T-Town's most famous Irish-themed pub. With no cover charge all weekend, live music scheduled each evening and everything from Guinness and Harp, to Smithwick's and Killian's Irish Red on tap, Arnie's is the place to be. While celebrating at this cozy hangout, don't forget to try your hand at a game of shuffleboard, throw a round of darts with friends or make your way to the outdoor patio. As an added bonus, all St. Patrick's Day beer is served in a 22 oz. souvenir cup.

Kilkenny's Irish Pub - Tulsa

Head over to Tulsa's trendy Cherry Street area for one of the city's biggest St. Patrick's Day blowouts at Kilkenny's Irish Pub. Dine on Irish fare such as beer-battered fish and chips, corned beef and cabbage or potato soup, before heading outside to join the festivities under Kilkenny's party tent. Live music, food specials and vendors get the celebration started, while pints of Guinness, glasses of single malt scotch and shots of Irish whiskey keep it going until 2am.

St. Paddy's Party - Claremore


Even Will Rogers gets dressed up for the St. Paddy's Party in Claremore, located a short 30 minutes from central Tulsa. Visit the downtown area where green-clad spectators will be treated to live music from a Celtic band and traditional Irish grub like bangers and mash. The whole family will enjoy Claremore's shortest parade, and the little ones will have a chance to partake in some festive face painting.

Ghost Town Road Trip - Shamrock

Although there is no official St. Paddy's party in the almost abandoned town of Shamrock, this unique town deserves a celebration on St. Patrick's Day. Take a road trip to this eerie ghost town, which boomed around 1913 when the Cushing Oil Field was discovered. Oil field workers created a rowdy town full of saloons, gambling halls, hotels and brothels before they began to move along to new boomtowns in the mid-1920s. Shamrock made headlines again in 1932 when famous outlaw Pretty Boy Floyd robbed the local bank. Visit the sleepy town to see the old-fashioned businesses and Irish customs left behind almost a century ago.

No matter which St. Patrick's Day celebration you choose to attend, if you decide to toast your inner Irishman with an alcoholic beverage, please remember to celebrate responsibly. Sláinte!

Data Master: Alyssa Hollingsworth

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Taco Tomatoes



Ingredients

4 tomatoes
 1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
 1 medium onion, chopped
 1 lb. ground beef
 1 packet taco seasoning
 kosher salt
 Freshly ground black pepper
 2/3 c. shredded Mexican cheese
 1/2 c. shredded iceberg lettuce
 1/2 c. sour cream

Directions

In a medium skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add onion and cook until tender, about 5 minutes. Add ground beef and taco sea-

soning, breaking up the meat with a wooden spoon. Season with salt and pepper, and cook until the beef is no longer pink, about 6 minutes. Drain fat and set aside.

Flip tomatoes so they are stem-side down. Cut the tomatoes into six wedges, being careful to not cut completely through the tomato. Carefully spread open the wedges.

Divide taco meat evenly among the tomatoes, then top each with cheese, lettuce, and sour cream. Serve.



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How to Soften Butter Quickly (Without a Microwave)



Wouldn't it be nice if you could always remember to soften butter before you needed to use it? Well, it's good to dream. But if you live in the real world where nobody's perfect (and last-minute snack attacks do happen), there are some ways to soften butter at the last minute without getting the melted mess the microwave inevitably causes.

That's right. Don't use the microwave. Or the stovetop. Doing so can cause it to melt or soften unevenly, which can cause unexpected results in many recipes. But there are several options to soften the butter more naturally.

1. Cube the butter

The minute you realize you've forgotten to soften the butter, pull it out, and cut it into small cubes. Place the cubes in a single layer on a dish, and set it aside to soften while you measure and prepare the rest of the ingredients. It should be ready in about 20 minutes.

It works because cutting the butter exposes parts of the butter that would otherwise be protected from the room temperature

air, increasing the exposed surface area, which means it absorbs the heat in the room faster.

This is exactly the same thing as taking the entire stick or a portion of the stick out of the fridge and setting it on the counter; it just goes faster. You lose very little butter on your knife and hands, so the measured amount is essentially the same.

2. Grate the butter

Grating the butter follows the same principle as cubing the butter but creates even more surface area. Additionally there will be increased friction from the grating process, and since you'll have to touch the butter, heat will transfer from your hands. I don't recommend using a food processor for the grate unless you're refreezing it for an application that takes extra-cold butter, like pie crust or biscuits, as the food processor will generate even more friction, which probably won't actually melt it but will make it very tough to handle and scrape off and out of all the parts.

Just use a box or handheld grater with large holes, and grate it just like you would cheese. But do so quickly, as the heat

from your hands will cause it to get messy fast. The upside to this method is that it softens even faster than cubing — it may be soft as soon as you're done, but if not, check again in about five minutes. The downside is that it's much messier and you risk using more butter, which will melt to your hands and stick to the grater. In most applications, butter loss is still minimal and not likely to cause much of a problem, but you can always remeasure it if you need to.

3. Flatten the butter

Again, here you're increasing the surface area, with the added bonus of a little extra friction. The upside is that it's less messy than the grater (or really, even the knife). The downside is that some people find it a bit awkward, especially if your fridge makes your butter a bit stiffer (it can tend to slide around a bit instead of flatten at first). Another downside is that it relies on waxed paper, which is something you can run out of (whereas once you buy a knife or grater, you always have it barring it breaking). But it does work really well.

Just place the butter between two pieces of waxed paper, gently smash it with a rolling pin (just to take some of the height off), and then roll it out like pie crust dough until it's about a 1/4 inch thick. In a pinch, you can use a zip-top bag as long as it's big enough to roll out the dough, though it's a little tougher to get out of the bag. But don't ever use plastic wrap or foil, which will get mangled or stick to the butter or your rolling pin.

When it's the right thickness, peel away the waxed paper, turn it out onto a plate, and let it rest for up to three minutes.

4. Gently heat the butter

This is probably my favorite method for serving butter as a condiment at dinner because it leaves your butter intact so you can cut it into nice pats to top mashed potatoes or corn on the cob or to slather on your favorite homemade bread.

Instead of using higher heat methods like the stovetop, microwave or a double boiler, which have a high risk for melting (which is not ideal for serving it at dinner), it uses a much gentler heat.

Cut the butter into a piece small enough to fit under a glass. The larger a piece of butter you need, the larger a glass you need. It needs to be glass or ceramic, not plastic, which doesn't retain heat as well.

Set the butter on a plate or saucer next to the sink. Grab a paper towel too; you'll need that shortly. Fill a glass with hot water, and let it sit for a few minutes until the heat of the water begins to transfer to the glass. The glass will feel warm on the outside. Then just dump out the water, give it a quick wipe with a paper towel, and immediately cover the butter with it. In one to two minutes, the butter will be softened and still be presentable for the dinner table.

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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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<p><i>Guests are always welcome.</i> <i>See you Sunday at worship.</i></p>	<p>St. John Lutheran Church 607 SE 9th Street, Pryor, OK. Sunday School and Bible Class 9:15 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. 918-825-1926 Email: stjohncpyor@sbcglobal.net - Website: www.stjohncpyor.org</p>

Data Master: Nikki Hamilton

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11 Struggles Every Stay at Home Mom Faces on the Daily



Being a stay at home mom is a true gift - you get to be there for your child basically all the time and do a job in which you are a completely irreplaceable "employee." But as with any job there are struggles and challenges you face on the regular, and for SAHMs those range from having your deepest conversations on the topic of Doc McStuffins or figuring out how to be in seven places at once because everyone assumes that staying at home means you have - laugh with us - free time. If you're a SAHM, read through for 11 struggles that you probably know all too well. You are constantly responding to people asking, "What do you DO all day?"

As if taking care of a child isn't a full-time job that has you running around like a chicken with no head all day. Most of the words you say out loud per day are either to yourself or a human under the age of five. Your conversations with adults have likely suffered as a result. There's a moment in every day when everyone is napping and you think you can run out for an errand, then realize you're stuck in a catch-22 that gets you every time.

You microwave your coffee multiple times a morning, though you only manage to take about three sips total. Then you find it freezing cold in the microwave the next morning as you go to nuke your fresh cup - the cycle continues.

The decision to get dressed is a daily internal struggle. When the leggings you've been wearing for the last three days in a row are as comfy as they are, why shake things up? You are always the first to catch whatever illnesses your kids bring home from

school. And then have to care for the rest of the family as they fall victim to the germs like human dominoes.

The only days you plan on being productive during nap times are the days nap time lasts about three minutes. Paying the bills is totally at the mercy of the baby's nap - oh well. You're constantly told you're "so lucky" that you can afford to stay home with your kids. Meanwhile, the reality is likely that after childcare and commuting fees you'd bring home about \$37 a week, so it's not so much a choice as a responsible financial decision.

You always have something unidentifiable on your shirt, and never notice until it's too late and you're in public. On the plus side, you always have baby wipes in your purse.

Because you don't work in a conventional sense, it's assumed you have time to volunteer for fundraisers and bake sales. But just because your job isn't in an office, doesn't mean you can bake 400 cupcakes for tomorrow's bake sale.

Every time someone asks, "So, what do you do?" you have to figure out how to make them understand your bada** "job." Well, I actually do it all - what do you do again?

Data Master: Nikki Hamilton

This Month in History: March

March 1

March 1, 1781 - Formal ratification of the Articles of Confederation was announced by Congress. Under the Articles, Congress was the sole governing body of the new American national government, consisting of the 13 original states. The Articles remained in effect through the Revolutionary War until 1789, when the current U.S. Constitution was adopted.

March 1, 1932 - The 20-month-old son of aviation pioneer Charles A. Lindbergh was kidnapped from his home in Hopewell, New Jersey. The Lindberghs then paid a \$50,000 ransom. However, on May 12, the boy's body was found in a wooded area a few miles from the house.

March 1, 1961 - President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps, an organization sending young American volunteers to developing countries to assist with health care, education and other basic human needs.

March 1, 1974 - Seven former high-ranking officials of the Nixon White House were indicted for conspiring to obstruct the investigation into the Watergate break-in. Among those indicted; former chief of staff H.R. Haldeman, former top aide John Ehrlichman, and former attorney general John Mitchell.

Birthdays - American band leader Glenn Miller (1904-1944) was born in Carilinda, Iowa. His music gained enormous popularity during the 1940's through recordings such as Moonlight Serenade and String of Pearls. On December 15, 1944, his plane disappeared over the English Channel while en route to Paris where he was scheduled to perform.

March 2

March 2, 1943 - During World War II in the Pacific, a Japanese convoy was attacked by 137 American bombers as the Battle of Bismarck Sea began. The convoy included eight destroyers and eight transports carrying 7,000 Japanese soldiers heading toward New Guinea. Four destroyers and all eight transports were sunk, resulting in 3,500 Japanese drowned, ending Japanese efforts to send reinforcements to New Guinea.

Birthdays - American soldier and politician Sam Houston (1793-1863) was born in Rockbridge County, Virginia. As a teenager he ran away and joined the Cherokee Indians who accepted him as a member of their tribe. He later served as a Congressman and Governor of Tennessee. In 1832, he became commander of the Texan army in the War for Texan Independence, defeating the larger Mexican army in 1836 at the Battle of San Jacinto. He then served as Senator and Governor of the new state of Texas but was removed in 1861 after refusing to swear allegiance to the Confederacy.

March 3

March 3, 1913 - A women's suffrage march in Washington D.C. was attacked by angry onlookers while police stood by. The march occurred the day before Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. Many of the 5,000 women participating were spat upon and struck in the face as a near riot ensued. Secretary of War Henry Stimson then ordered soldiers from Fort Myer to restore order.

Birthdays - Railroad car builder George Pullman (1831-1897) was born in Brocton, New York. He improved railroad sleeping accommodations, developing the folding upper berth and lower berth designs. His company went on to become the biggest railroad car building organization in the world.

Birthdays - Telephone inventor Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922) was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. Bell and his father were involved in teaching deaf persons to speak. Bell developed an

interest in the vibrating membrane as a method of electrically transmitting sounds. His very first sentence spoken on the newly invented telephone on March 10, 1876, was to his assistant, "Mister Watson, come here, I want you."

March 4

March 4, 1681 - King Charles II of England granted a huge tract of land in the New World to William Penn to settle an outstanding debt. The area later became Pennsylvania.

March 4, 1789 - The first meeting of the new Congress under the new U.S. Constitution took place in New York City.

March 4, 1830 - Former President John Quincy Adams returned to Congress as a representative from Massachusetts. He was the first ex-president ever to return to the House and served eight consecutive terms.

March 4, 1933 - Newly elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office and delivered his first inaugural address attempting to restore public confidence during the Great Depression, stating, "Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself..." His cabinet appointments included the first woman to a Cabinet post, Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins.

Birthdays - Revolutionary war hero Casimir Pulaski (1747-1779) was born in Poland. Before aiding in the American Revolution, he was a military leader in Poland's struggle against Imperial Russia. He joined the Americans in 1777 and fought alongside General Washington at Brandywine, then served at Germantown and Valley Forge. He was mortally wounded during a heroic charge in the Siege of Savannah, Georgia.

Birthdays - American football legend Knute Rockne (1888-1931) was born in Voss, Norway. He coached the Notre Dame Football team for 13 seasons, amassing an overall record of 105 wins, 12 losses and 5 ties. He became famous for his locker room pep talks and the saying, "Win one for the Gipper." He was killed in an airplane crash on March 31, 1931, in Kansas.

March 5 Return to Top of Page

March 5, 1770 - The Boston Massacre occurred as a group of rowdy Americans harassed British soldiers who then opened fire, killing five and injuring six. The first man killed was Crispus Attucks, an African American. British Captain Thomas Preston and eight of his men were arrested and charged with murder. Their trial took place in October, with colonial lawyer John Adams defending the British. Captain Preston and six of his men were acquitted. Two others were found guilty of manslaughter, branded, then released.

March 5, 1868 - The U.S. Senate convened as a court to hear charges against President Andrew Johnson during impeachment proceedings. The House of Representatives had already voted to impeach the President. The vote followed bitter opposition by the Radical Republicans in Congress to Johnson's reconstruction policies in the South. However, the effort to remove him failed in the Senate by just one vote and he remained in office.

March 5, 1933 - Amid a steadily worsening economic situation, newly elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed a four-day "Bank Holiday" to stop panic withdrawals by the public and the possible collapse of the American banking system.

March 5, 1946 - The "Iron Curtain" speech was delivered by Winston Churchill at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. Churchill used the term to describe the boundary in Europe between free countries of the West and nations of Eastern Europe under Soviet Russia's control.

March 6

March 6, 1836 - Fort Alamo fell to Mexican troops led by Gen-

eral Santa Anna. The Mexicans had begun the siege of the Texas fort on February 23rd, ending it with the killing of the last defender. "Remember the Alamo" became a rallying cry for Texans who went on to defeat Santa Anna in the Battle of San Jacinto in April.

Birthday - Renaissance genius Michelangelo (1475-1564) was born in Caprese, Italy. He was a painter, sculptor, architect, poet and visionary best known for his fresco on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and his sculptures David and The Pieta.

March 7

Birthday - Stephen Hopkins (1707-1785) was born in Providence, Rhode Island. He was the state's colonial governor and was a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

March 8

March 8, 1863 - During the American Civil War, Confederate Colonel John Mosby, leader of Mosby's Rangers, captured Union General E.H. Stoughton at his headquarters in Fairfax County Courthouse, Virginia.

March 9

March 9, 1864 - Ulysses S. Grant was commissioned as a Lieutenant General and became commander of the Union armies.

Birthday - Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci (1451-1512) was born in Florence, Italy. He explored South America and the Amazon River, believing he had discovered a new continent. In 1507, a German mapmaker first referred to the lands discovered in the New World as America.

Birthday - Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin (1934-1968) was born in Gzhatsk, Russia. On April 12, 1961, he became the first human in space, orbiting in a capsule 187 miles above the Earth's surface in a flight lasting 108 minutes. His space flight caused a worldwide sensation and marked the beginning of the space race as the U.S. worked to catch up to the Russians and launch an American into space. President John F. Kennedy later asserted the U.S. would land a man on the moon before the end of the 1960's.

March 10 Return to Top of Page

March 10, 1862 - The first issue of U.S. government paper money occurred as \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills began circulation.

March 10, 1880 - The Salvation Army was founded in the United States. The social service organization was first founded in England by William Booth and operates today in 90 countries.

Birthday - Politician and playwright Claire Boothe Luce (1903-1987) was born in New York City. She served in the House of Representatives from 1943 to 1947 and then became the first woman appointed as U.S. ambassador to a major country (Italy).

March 11

March 11, 1918 - The 'Spanish' influenza first reached America as 107 soldiers become sick at Fort Riley, Kansas. One quarter of the U.S. population eventually became ill from the deadly virus, resulting in 500,000 deaths. The death toll worldwide approached 22 million by the end of 1920.

March 11, 1941 - During World War II, the Lend-Lease program began allowing Britain to receive American weapons, machines, raw materials, training and repair services. Ships, planes, guns and shells, along with food, clothing and metals went to the embattled British while American warships began patrolling the North Atlantic and U.S troops were stationed in Greenland and Iceland. "We must be the great arsenal of democracy," President Roosevelt declared concerning the fight against Hitler's Germany. The initial appropriation was \$7 Billion, but by 1946 the figure reached \$50 Billion in aid from the U.S. to its Allies.

Birthday - British prime minister and statesman Harold Wilson (1916-1995) was born in Huddersfield, Yorkshire. As a young boy he once posed for a photo in front of 10 Downing Street, the

residence he occupied 40 years later as head of the Labour government.

March 12

March 12, 1609 - The island of Bermuda was colonized by the British after a ship on its way to Virginia was wrecked on the reefs.

March 12, 1888 - The Great Blizzard of '88 struck the northeastern U.S. The storm lasted 36 hours with snowfall totaling over 40 inches in New York City where over 400 persons died from the surprise storm.

March 12, 1938 - Nazis invaded Austria, then absorbed the country into Hitler's Reich.

March 12, 1994 - The Church of England ordained 32 women as its first female priests. In protest, 700 male clergy members and thousands of church members left the church and joined the Roman Catholic Church which does not allow women priests.

March 12, 1999 - Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic became full-fledged members of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) less than ten years after exchanging communist rule for democracy and ending their Cold War military alliances with Soviet Russia.

Birthday - The founder of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (1881-1938) was born in Salonika, Greece. Following World War I, he led the Turkish revolution and became Turkey's first president.

March 13

March 13, 1943 - A plot to kill Hitler by German army officers failed as a bomb planted aboard his plane failed to explode due to a faulty detonator.

Birthday - Scientist and clergyman Joseph Priestly (1733-1804) was born in Yorkshire, England. He discovered oxygen and advanced the religious theory of Unitarianism.

March 14

Birthday - Albert Einstein (1879-1955) was born in Ulm, Germany. His theory of relativity led to new ways of thinking about time, space, matter and energy. He received a Nobel Prize in 1921 and emigrated to the U.S. in 1933 where he was an outspoken critic of Nazi Germany. Believing the Nazis might develop an atomic bomb, he warned President Roosevelt and urged the development of the U.S. Atomic bomb.

Birthday - The first female dentist, Lucy Hobbs (1833-1910) was born in New York state. She received her degree in 1866 from the Ohio College of Dental Surgery and was a women's rights advocate.

March 15 Return to Top of Page

March 15, 44 B.C. - Julius Caesar was assassinated in the Senate chamber in Rome by Brutus and fellow conspirators. After first trying to defend himself against the murderous onslaught, Caesar saw Brutus with a knife and asked "Et tu, Brute?" (You too, Brutus?) Caesar then gave up the struggle and was stabbed to death.

Birthday - Andrew Jackson (1767-1845) the 7th U.S. President was born in a log cabin in Waxhaw, South Carolina. As a boy he volunteered to serve in the American Revolution. Captured by the British, he refused an order to clean an officer's boots and was slashed by his sword. Jackson later gained fame as a hero during the War of 1812. In politics he helped form the new Democratic Party and became the first man from an impoverished background to be elected President, serving from 1829 to 1837.

March 16

March 16, 1968 - During the Vietnam War, the My Lai Massacre occurred as American soldiers of Charlie Company murdered 504 Vietnamese men, women, and children. Twenty-five U.S. Army officers were later charged with complicity in the massacre and

subsequent cover-up, but only one was convicted, and later pardoned by President Richard Nixon.

March 16, 1968 - New York Senator Robert Kennedy announced his intention to run for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Birthday - James Madison (1751-1836) the 4th U.S. President was born in Port Conway, Virginia. He played an important role in the formation of the new U.S. Constitution following the American Revolutionary War. During the War of 1812, President Madison was forced to flee Washington, D.C., while the British attacked and burned the White House and other important public buildings.

March 17

March 17th - Celebrated as Saint Patrick's Day commemorating the patron saint of Ireland.

March 17, 1776 - Early in the American Revolutionary War the British completed their evacuation of Boston following a successful siege conducted by Patriots. The event is still commemorated in Boston as Evacuation Day.

Birthday - U.S. Supreme Court Justice Roger B. Taney (1777-1864) was born in Calvert County, Maryland. He became the 5th Chief Justice in 1836, best known for the Dred Scott decision.

March 18

March 18, 1974 - The five-month-old Arab oil embargo against the U.S. was lifted. The embargo was in retaliation for American support of Israel during the Yom Kippur War of 1973 in which Egypt and Syria suffered a crushing defeat. In the U.S., the resulting embargo had caused long lines at gas stations as prices soared 300 percent amid shortages and a government ban on Sunday gas sales.

Birthday - Grover Cleveland (1837-1908) the 22nd and 24th U.S. president was born in Caldwell, New Jersey. He was the only president to serve two nonconsecutive terms and was also the only president to be married in the White House.

March 19

March 19, 2003 - The United States launched an attack against Iraq to topple dictator Saddam Hussein from power. The attack commenced with aerial strikes against military sites, followed the next day by an invasion of southern Iraq by U.S. and British ground troops. The troops made rapid progress northward and conquered the country's capital, Baghdad, just 21 days later, ending the rule of Saddam.

Birthday - William Bradford (1589-1657) was born in Yorkshire, England. He sailed aboard the Mayflower during its 66-day voyage from Plymouth, England to Massachusetts in 1620. The small ship carried over 100 passengers and a crew of 30. It was originally bound for Virginia but landed far north on Cape Cod. The Mayflower Compact was then drawn up as a form of government. Bradford became the first governor of the new Plymouth Colony, serving a total of 30 years, and was largely responsible for its success.

Birthday - Explorer and medical missionary David Livingstone (1813-1873) was born in Blantyre, Scotland. He arrived at Cape Town, Africa, in 1841 and began extensive missionary explorations, often traveling into areas that had never seen a white man. In his later years, he sought the source of the Nile River. He also became the subject of the famous search by news correspondent Henry Stanley who located him in 1871 near Lake Tanganyika in Africa after a difficult search and simply asked, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?"

Birthday - Wyatt Earp (1848-1929) was born in Monmouth, Illinois. He became a legendary figure in the Wild West as a lawman and gunfighter, best known for the shootout at the O.K. Corral in 1881, in which the Earp brothers (Wyatt, Virgil and Morgan) fought and defeated the Ike Clanton gang.

Birthday - American politician William Jennings Bryan (1860-

1925) was born in Salem, Illinois. He was defeated three times as a candidate for the presidency. He advocated a "free silver" monetary standard through unlimited coinage of silver rather than the gold standard. During a speech at the 1896 Democratic convention he electrified the delegates, stating, "You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns. You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold!" In 1925, he was the successful prosecutor in the Scopes 'monkey' trial in which a teacher was convicted of violating Tennessee's Anti-Evolution Bill forbidding the teaching of the theory of evolution. However, he died just 5 days after the verdict.

March 20 Return to Top of Page

March 20, 1995 - A nerve gas attack occurred on the Tokyo subway system during rush hour resulting in 12 persons killed and 5,000 injured. Japanese authorities later arrest the leader and members of a Japanese religious cult suspected in the attack.

Birthday - American psychologist B.F. Skinner (1904-1990) was born in Susquehanna, Pennsylvania. He pioneered theories of behaviorism and developed the Skinner box, a controlled environment for studying behavior.

March 21

March 21, 1918 - During World War I, the Second Battle of the Somme began as German General Erich von Ludendorff launched an all-out drive to win the war. The battle began with a five-hour artillery barrage followed by a rush of German troops. The offensive lasted until April 6th and resulted in the Germans gaining about 35 miles of territory. Allied and German casualty figures for both battles approached 500,000.

March 21, 1943 - A suicide/assassination plot by German Army officers against Hitler failed as the conspirators were unable to locate a short fuse for the bomb which was to be carried in the coat pocket of General von Gersdorff to ceremonies Hitler was attending.

Birthday - Organist and composer Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was born in Eisenach, Germany. His output included thousands of compositions, many used in churches. Among his best known works; The Brandenburg Concertos for orchestra, The Well-Tempered Clavier for keyboard, the St. John and St. Matthew passions, and the Mass in B Minor.

March 22

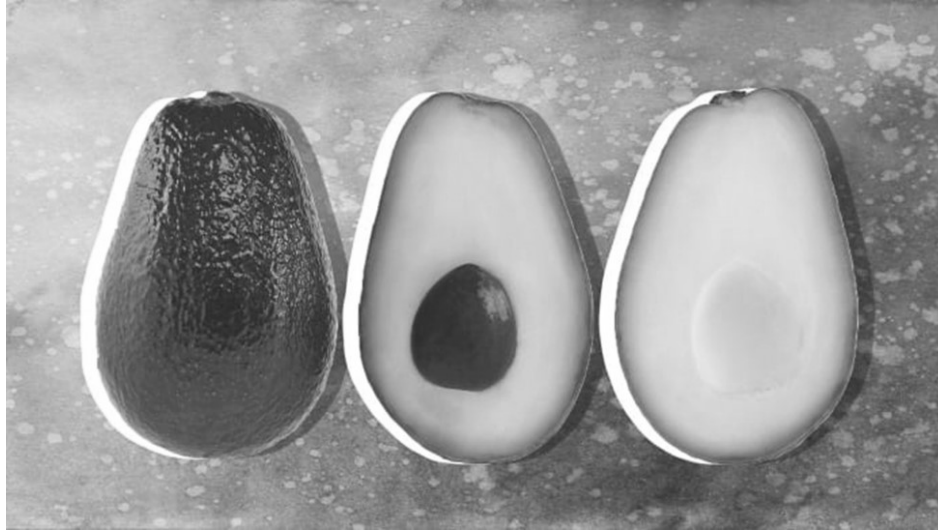
March 22, 1972 - The Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was passed by the U.S. Senate and then sent to the states for ratification. The ERA, as it became known, prohibited discrimination on the basis of gender, stating, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex," and that "the Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article." Although 22 of the required 38 states quickly ratified the Amendment, opposition arose over concerns that women would be subject to the draft and combat duty, along with other legal concerns. The ERA eventually failed (by 3 states) to achieve ratification despite an extension of the deadline to June 1982.

March 23

March 23, 1775 - Patrick Henry ignited the American Revolution with a speech before the Virginia convention in Richmond, stating, "I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!"

Data Master: Tino Hensley

Please Stop Cooking Your Avocados



There are a few culinary truths I hold near and dear to my heart. You shouldn't wrap cheese in plastic, drinking the milk of cockroaches is totally gross, and you should stop cooking your avocados, like, ASAP.

Lately, it seems like everywhere I go there's some form of cooked avocado on the menu. Whether it's avocado fries, eggs baked in avocado halves, or slimy avocado slices oozing out of grilled cheese, the madness has got to stop.

I must admit that even I have fallen into the trap of cooking perfectly good avocados. My friend has an overly abundant avocado tree and sent me home with a basket of them one day. I never grew tired of eating them in guac, on toast or sliced over salads, but considering I had so many, I thought I might experiment. I put some chopped avocado into a batch of enchiladas, excited to see how their creaminess would add to the dish. So imagine my surprise and disappointment when I took my first bite, my tongue immediately recoiling at the slimy green avocado within. It was the first time I ever thought to myself that maybe avocado doesn't make every dish better.

Have you ever tasted cooked avocado and raw avocado side-by-side? The hot avocado is pasty and slimy, its cool creaminess totally lost. The flavor is akin to chewing on some pine needles. It's like a totally different fruit! And I can't think of any instance when these dishes wouldn't be better with a side of raw avocado.

Craving fries? Instead of battering and frying wedges of avocado, serve regular fries with a side of guac for dipping. Want avocado at breakfast? Avocado toast is a trend for a reason, people!

There are a couple of exceptions to my self-imposed rule. Avocados do work surprisingly well when mashed or puréed and added to baked goods as a heart-healthy replacement for butter or oil. There's so much sugar and so many other ingredients in those recipes that the bitter flavor disappears, and because it's blended, it integrates with the other ingredients and doesn't get slimy. It's also tasty when blended up with garlic and herbs to make a creamy sauce for pasta. Since you're tossing the avocado

mixture with cooked pasta rather than heating it directly, it doesn't develop those same off flavors that can easily ruin a meal.

There are some things best left as nature intended. Cool and creamy avocados, with their silky, rich texture and light vegetal flavor, are definitely one of them. So the next time you feel the craving hit, keep the oven off and just dig in with a spoon the way nature intended. Your taste buds will definitely thank you.

Data Master: Alyssa Hollingsworth

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6 Health & Fitness Tips From Olympic Athletes

Are you so excited for the 2018 Olympics that you wish you could, like, become an Olympian yourself? We've got your back. Here are the top health and fitness tips used every day by our favorite Olympic athletes.

- Mornings matter
- According to American swimmer Natalie Coughlin, it's time to become a morning person. This 12-time Olympic medalist takes breakfast very seriously and considers it to be a critical foundation for the rest of your day.
- "If you start your day off with a doughnut, you kind of trash that day," Coughlin told SheKnows. "But if you start on the right foot, with a healthy breakfast, you'll be much more likely to continue making healthy choices the rest of the day."
- So do your future self a favor and pair your morning coffee with a balanced breakfast of good carbs and healthy proteins. Satisfied and energized, you'll be able to fearlessly conquer the midday munchies later.
- Schedule meals around your workouts
- Unlike Kerri Walsh, we can't all fit in a daily beachfront workout. However, we can still steal her killer meal-prep tips. For this Olympic volleyball star, fueling your body before, during and after your workout is essential for optimal performance and recovery.
- Walsh suggests eating an hour to an hour-and-a-half before a workout and immediately consuming protein afterward. In between your squats, burpees and power jams, don't forget to pay attention to your body too. Often reaching for sports drinks like Gatorade while competing, Walsh reminds us to monitor and maintain our energy levels while working out to ensure a strong — and safe — finish.
- Become friends with carbs
- In the face of the extreme dieting trends we tend to see today, it may come as a shock that carbohydrates aren't the enemy of serious athletes, but rather an important ally. In fact, professional soccer player and gold medalist Abby Wambach wouldn't be able to get through warm-ups without them. "Human beings need carbohydrates," Wambach told SheKnows. "It's our fuel. It would be like getting into a car with no gas. It's the energy that makes you go."
- Wambach warns against low-calorie "quick-fix" diets and instead suggests maintaining a more individualized nutrition plan and experimenting to find the right amount of healthy, complex carbs for your body type and fitness level. Hear that? It's time to end the feud with carbs.
- Make fitness a family affair
- We often forget that Olympians are parents too. So how exactly do they squeeze fitness into their full-time schedule of parenting? A busy mom of two, Olympic curler Erika Brown suggests integrating health and fitness into family time in any way you can.

- Remember: Your decision-making leaves an impression on your children. The earlier you establish healthy habits, the better. So, whether it's running around with the kids in the backyard, volunteering to coach their little league team or simply sitting down for a healthy dinner, you are exemplifying the importance of leading active lifestyles — and that deserves a medal in itself.
- De-stress & decompress
- After a lifetime spent on balance beams, gymnast Nastia Liukin knows a thing or two about stability. For this five-time Olympic medalist, fitness is all about seeking balance.
- "Make sure you are getting plenty of sleep, taking time to exercise and taking time to do the little things that make you happy, whether it's getting a fun manicure or reading a great book or just taking a bubble bath," Liukin told SheKnows.
- Feeling stressed out can easily lead to impulsive, unhealthy decision-making. So go ahead: Treat yo'self with some daily me-time; it's the Olympian-approved safeguard for your health goals.
- Remember to rest
- Our vision of an Olympic athlete often involves an alarm clock ringing at an absurdly early hour of the morning followed by an unimaginably grueling workout framed by some version of the infamous phrase, "no days off."

This myth is busted by Olympic swimmer Summer Sanders, who stresses the importance of recognizing the difference between feeling the burn and feeling a pain.

"A large percentage of running injuries need rest from running," Sanders, who now runs marathons competitively, told SheKnows. "When an injury occurs, runners need to stop and listen to their bodies, force themselves to take a break from their training schedule and take care of themselves."

Even if you're not a runner, give yourself a break. To prevent overworking your body, experiment with cross-training to give your muscles, joints and bones some recovery time. If you're lifting weights several times a week, try yoga. If you often do high-impact workouts, incorporate swimming into your workout regimen. In addition to mixing up your workouts, Sanders is also a huge advocate for getting a solid night's sleep. Permission to get in bed before 9 p.m. granted.

Got all that? Good — you're one step closer to being a gold medalist. Now you've just gotta get yourself to Pyeongchang.

Data Master: Cody Welch

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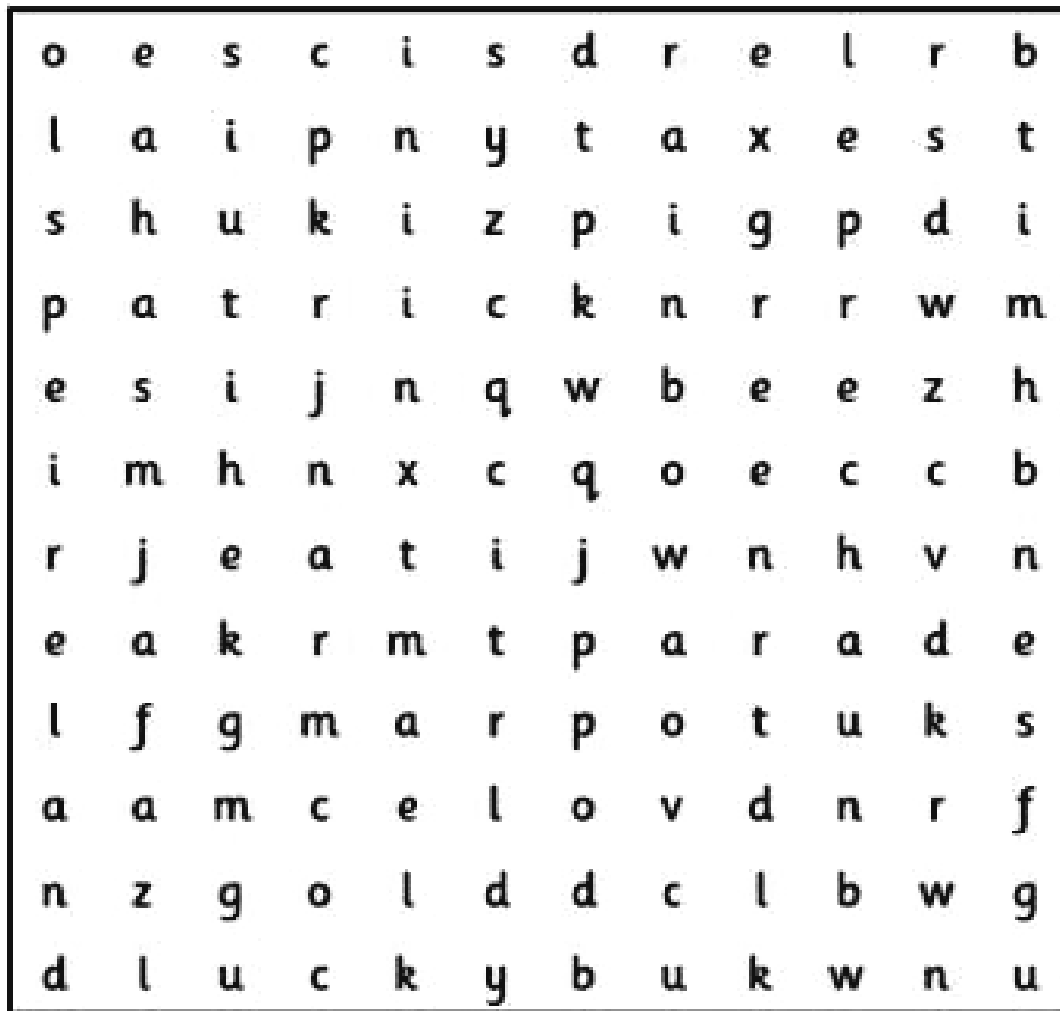
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8 Travel Mistakes You're Making & How to Avoid Them

Nearly missing a flight, packing a banned item — we've all made a travel mistake at some point. Once, I booked a flight that would have lasted 10 hours as a direct flight and ended up lasting 24 as a series of connections in order to save a couple hundred dollars. The world of travel is vast, and we're all guilty of making bad decisions here and there. But since knowledge is power, here are the travel mistakes you're probably making and how to avoid them in the future.

1. Not checking your mobile phone plan

Alister Puntun of Storylines says people often forget to check their mobile plans or wrongly assume they're covered when they're abroad. "Not checking your mobile phone plan can be an expensive mistake," he says.

The fix: Check your plan and make sure you buy appropriate coverage or put your phone on airplane mode and be prepared to have to seek out hotspots wherever you're traveling.

2. Not preparing to be disconnected

As much as we might assume Wi-Fi is global, there are plenty of places you won't be able to connect — especially for free. Many international airports charge for internet connection and not every town will have a wired coffee shop nearby.

The fix: Research your destination to get a sense of how common a hookup is and plan accordingly. Download podcasts, music and games that are playable offline before you board the airplane. Make notes about how to direct your taxi driver or find bus routes if you can't count on a connection. And if you are relying on a maps app, don't forget to start your GPS route — your phone can still reliably track directions with GPS even if you're out of service area as long as the route is set and started before you go offline.

3. Buying a million plastic water bottles

We've all heard horror stories about drinking the water in unfamiliar countries, but that doesn't excuse us from our planet-saving duties. Plus, it's expensive, says Sofie Couwenbergh of Wonderful Wanderings.

The fix: "Even when you're traveling somewhere you'd rather not drink the tap water, you can use a filtering bottle or filtering tabs to mix with your tap water." One example is the Katadyn BeFree, which has the added benefit of being collapsi-

ble so it doesn't take up too much space.

4. Eating in the most popular tourist areas

"People also lose money by walking into the restaurants on the big touristy squares," Couwenbergh says. Meals tend to be overpriced for the level of quality, when really excellent meals can often be had just a few streets away from the main downtown drag.

The fix: Bring small snacks for emergencies and otherwise do a scan of just-outside-the-center restaurants with great reviews so you can hit those while you're in the area or even make your meals part of your itinerary.

5. Exchanging currency at the airport

If you're flying out of the country, you'll likely need to exchange your local dollars for the currency of your destination (pesos, pounds, euros, etc.) While every major airport has a currency-exchange counter, it will cost you — typically upward of \$10 in your native currency. Depending on where you're headed, that can mean you're actually losing money no matter how great the exchange rate is.

The fix: Most major banks will exchange currency for no charge if you're a customer. Do call or go in a couple of weeks in advance, as they may need to have the currency delivered.

6. Not having a travel-friendly credit card

Using your card in a foreign country can end up costing you extra. Most debit cards incur an exchange rate fee, plus whatever fee the ATM you're using charges. Many credit cards will even charge for currency exchange.

The fix: If you're a frequent international traveler, consider getting a card with travel perks like no fees for purchasing items in a foreign currency. Chase Sapphire Preferred Card and Capital One Venture Rewards Card regularly receive high ratings.

7. Not researching your itinerary

You did the work to book your trip, but if you've got a checklist of things you want to do and haven't spent any time researching them, you could be wasting valuable time. Travelers often "don't know how to most efficiently get from one site to

another,” Couwenbergh says, “or when which attraction is open — and end up in front of closed doors.”

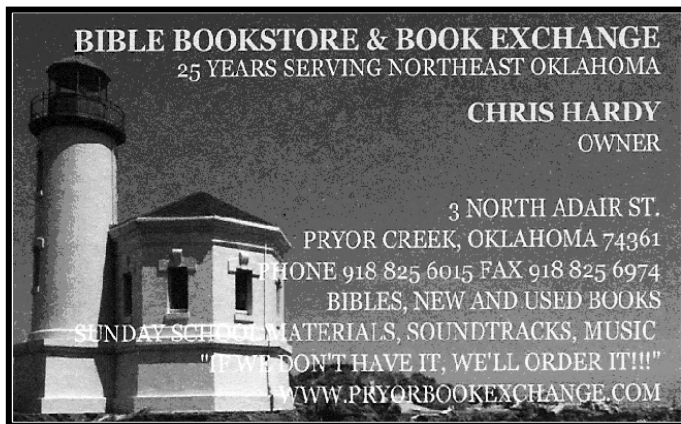
The fix: Plug your itinerary items into an extended Google Maps search and see if you can find a route that makes the most sense. Then jot down the open hours for each destination and an estimate of how long you’d like to spend at each place so you can plan appropriately and make changes on the fly.

8. Overbooking yourself

Even when you’re finally on the trip of your dreams, you can end up getting some intense FOMO. Did you see everything worth seeing? Eat everywhere worth eating? Is there another hidden gem in the area you absolutely must go to? It’s easy to turn a vacation into something not so relaxing.

The fix: A little self-knowledge goes a long way here. Are you OK waking up early if it means seeing something interesting, or will it throw off your whole day? Does a morning of walking tend to leave you sleepy by the afternoon? Do you need time to rejuvenate after navigating your way through a foreign place for hours? Keep these things in mind as you make your itinerary, and above all be flexible. Yes, you want to make memories, but probably not one in which you stood hangry and miserable in front of one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

Data Master: Steve Burdick



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Your Next Trip to Disney World Is Going to Be More Expensive



If you're planning a trip to Disney World or Disneyland or you're just a Disney fan, listen up, because there's a big change happening.

Effective immediately, Disney is now raising the price of admission tickets anywhere between \$2 to \$7 in Orlando, Florida. An adult-value ticket to the Magic Kingdom now costs \$109 (a \$2 increase), regular park tickets are now \$119 and peak-day tickets are now \$129 (both a \$4 increase). Tickets to other parks (Disney's Hollywood Studios, Epcot and Animal Kingdom) will now cost between \$102 and \$122.

Those of us who are completely obsessed with Disney (like me!) and want to go to Disney World year-round will also have to pay more for annual passes now. Silver passes are now \$439; gold passes are \$589; and platinum passes are \$729.

If you're closer to Disneyland, there's some good news for you. Even though a few tickets are rising by \$11, which is worse than Disney World, not every ticket there is becoming more expensive — a value one-day park-hopper pass is \$10 less and is now

\$147.

So why the price increase? Well, Andrea Finger, a Disney Spokeswoman, told Refinery29, "We know how important making memories at Disney theme parks is to families and we will continue to evolve our pricing in a way that gives families a range of options to meet their budget and helps better spread attendance throughout the year so they can make the most of every visit."

The happiest places on Earth may have gotten harder to get into, but once you step in and see that beautiful castle in front of your eyes, it will all be worth it.

Data Master: Eric Peachy & Alyssa Hollingsworth

Why Some Cold Medicines Moved (& Stayed) Behind the Counter

When it comes to medication, we usually think of two types: prescription and over-the-counter. But as you probably noticed, a few years ago, some of the cold and flu medications available without a prescription moved from the publicly accessible shelves to behind the counter — only available if you specifically ask a pharmacist for them.

So what's behind the move? And why did some cold medications wind up guarded by the pharmacist while others remain on display next to the antifungal cream? Let's find out.

Why did some cold medications move?

The USA Patriot Act — signed into law in 2006 — typically conjures up images of post-9/11 policies intended to keep terrorism at bay. While that's partially true, it also contained a provision that required all cold and allergy medications containing the ingredients pseudoephedrine, ephedrine and phenylpropranolamine be moved to behind the counter. According to Dr. Edmond Sarraf, Genexa medical expert and attending physician at Cedar Sinai Medical Center, this was because of the influx of methamphetamine, aka crystal meth, production.

"People were buying large quantities and breaking it down to be used in the production of illegal drugs, including speed/methamphetamines," Dr. Ehsan Ali, a concierge doctor practicing in Beverly Hills, tells SheKnows. "Sudafed or any medicine that has pseudoephedrine in it, are some of the ones found behind the counter because they're a decongestant that also acts as a stimulant meant to treat a runny nose and/or common cold."

Eventually, law enforcement officials became increasingly aware more children and young adults were buying these OTC meds in large quantities to make meth, which was heavily contributing to the opioid epidemic we are still combating today in the United States, Sarraf says.

"Fast-forward to January 2018, when the FDA recently banned opioid ingredients in children's cough medications to prevent unwarranted deaths," he adds. "Year over year, the FDA has banned more ingredients in medicines that have been found to be unsafe or deadly."

In addition to concerns over crystal meth production, the move to behind-the-counter medications also affected those that contain codeine — like certain cough syrups, Dr. Susan Besser, a primary care provider at Mercy Personal Physicians at Overlea, explains. She says these medications were relocated because of the possibility of abuse.

"Codeine is an opioid, and we have all heard about the current epidemic relating to that," Besser adds.

What happens when you go to the counter?

Instead of having products containing pseudoephedrine on the shelves, many pharmacies put cards with a photo and description of the medication on the display. This allows you to select what you want and bring it up to the pharmacist at the counter.

Also know that the pharmacy is supposed to be keeping track of your purchases of the behind-the-counter medications. Amy Lancot, CVS spokesperson, tells SheKnows all their pharmacies are connected to the MethCheck database, and their elec-

tronic log system prevents sales of drugs that contain pseudoephedrine to an individual beyond the permissible limits set by federal and state laws.

Which medications are affected?

It's a pretty long list, but some of the major ones are: Advil Allergy Sinus, Advil Cold and Sinus, Aleve-D Sinus and Cold, Children's Advil Cold, Children's Motrin Cold, Claritin-D, Mucinex D, Sudafed 12 Hour Pressure/Pain, Sudafed Triple Action, Theraflu Max-D Severe Cold and Flu, Tylenol Sinus Severe Congestion Daytime and Zyrtec-D.

Is the move working?

This is a tricky one. While the opioid epidemic isn't exactly getting better, Ali says moving some cold medications behind the counter is working because now it's considerably harder to buy drugs with these potentially dangerous ingredients — not to mention that each customer is only allotted a limited quantity.

If nothing else, this move has made consumers more aware of the ingredients in their medications and reinforced the notion that it's important to look at drug labels, Sarraf says. Given the opioid crisis is at an all-time high, he notes the FDA is becoming more cooperative with ingredient transparency — which he thinks is a step in the right direction.

"Not only should these medications stay behind the counter, the ingredients used to make them should be used to a minimum, which has already happened in most European countries," Sarraf says. "Just like there is a movement for organic fruits and vegetables, there should be a movement for organic ingredients to make healthier medicines."

Data Master: Cody Welch

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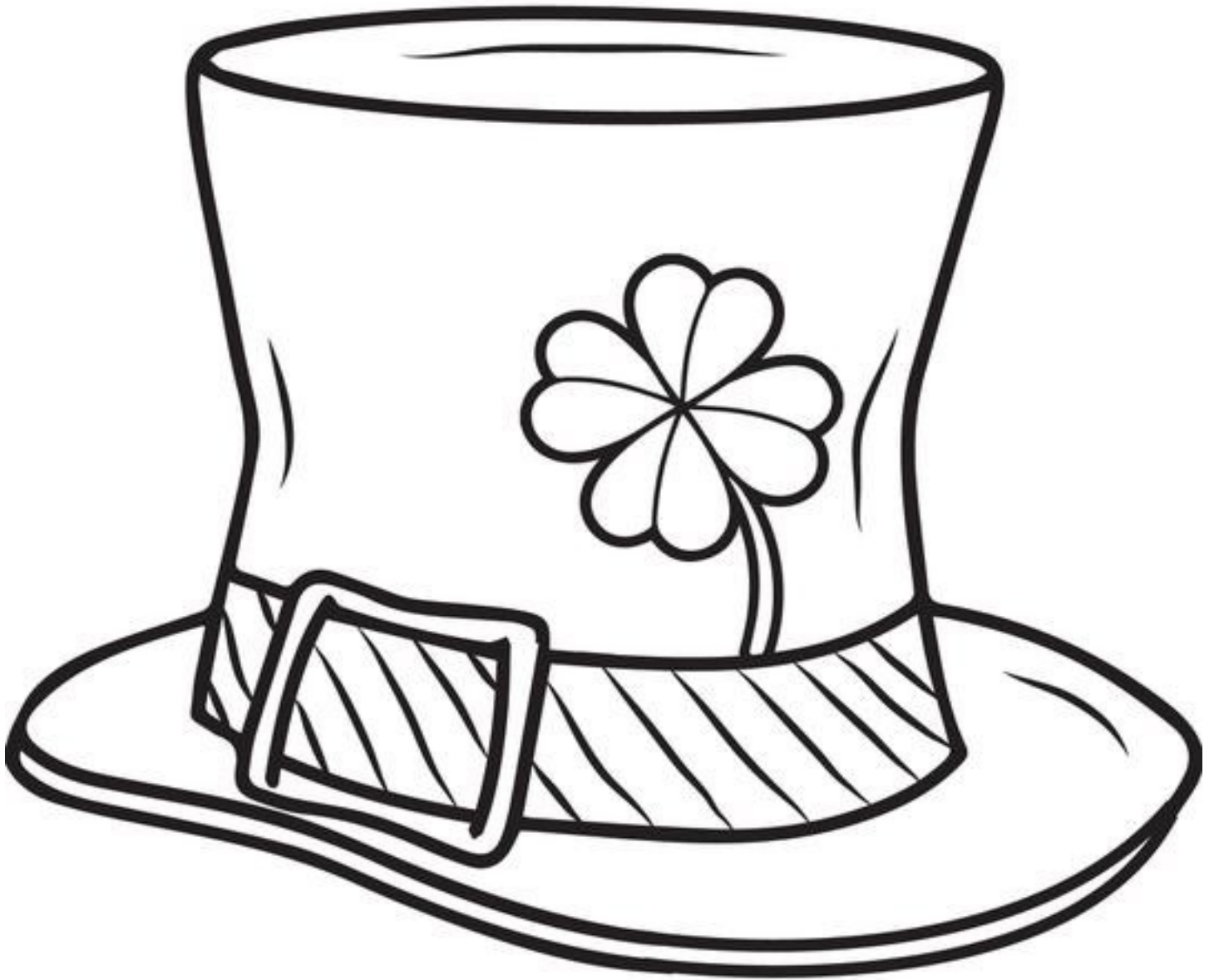
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Mar 05, 2018 to Mar 11, 2018 Oklahoma Reining Horse Association Ride & Slide The Oklahoma Reining Horse Association Ride & Slide is an action-packed display of equestrian skills at the Tulsa Expo Center. Watch cowboys and cowgirls of all ages and abilities compete in a variety of challenging events that will keep you on the edge of your seat. See riders guide horses through precise patterns of circles, spins and sliding stops at speeds alternating between a slow lope and a fast gallop. Cheer for your favorites as green reiner, rookie, non-pro derby, youth, professional and novice riders take to the arena in this thrilling show. Tulsa Expo Square 4145 E 21st St Tulsa, OK 74114 Phone: 405-826-6147

Mar 07, 2018 ORU Golden Eagles vs Wichita State Shockers Support the ORU Golden Eagles baseball team with tickets to their action-packed games. Grab a snack from the concession stand, and take a seat at the J.L. Johnson Stadium in Tulsa to see the fierce competition unfold. Founded in 1963, the Golden Eagles team has taken on opponents across the country, decked out in Vegas gold, navy blue and white. Watch the Golden Eagles battle the Wichita State Shockers on their home turf this season. J.L. Johnson Stadium Tulsa, OK 74136 Phone: 918-495-6000

Mar 08, 2018 to Mar 11, 2018 Greater Tulsa Home & Garden Show Find everything you need for your home and garden including useful tips and new products at the Greater Tulsa Home & Garden Show at Tulsa's Expo Square. With over 500 exhibitors, you'll want to spend more than one day looking through everything vendors have to offer. Roam through the How-To Stage and learn about home improvement projects you can take on yourself and explore the gardens exhibit with a dozen outdoor landscapers on site. Tulsa Expo Square 4145 E 21st St Tul-

sa, OK 74112 Phone: 918-663-5820

Mar 08, 2018 to Mar 11, 2018 Grand Lake Boat & Sport Show The Grand Lake Boat & Sport Show is an annual expo held in Grove. Visitors to this event will find a wide array of boat dealers, RV dealers and miscellaneous sport vendors. Come to the Grand Lake Boat & Sport Show to browse through a large selection of watercraft, boats, RVs, fishing tackle, clothing and other sporting products. All boats and RVs featured at this show are completely new. Visit the Grand Lake Boat & Sport Show to see the newest lake and sporting products before anyone else. This event will also feature hourly giveaways as well as arts and crafts from a variety of vendors. Concessions will be available on site. Civic Center

1720 S Main St Grove, OK 74344 Phone: 918-786-2289 Fax: 918-786-3386

Mar 09, 2018 Caffeine Crawl Tulsa Coffee lovers in Tulsa will not want to miss the annual Caffeine Crawl. Meet new people, try delicious coffee drinks and head to some terrific coffee shops in the metro area you may not be aware of. This is a ticketed event, and pre-registration is required. There are several routes covering coffee and tea shops across the metro. Along the way, try pour overs, cold brews and everything in between. Each shop is locally owned and has been chosen for their skill at coffee, tea and creative uses of coffee in drinks, chocolates and more. Participants provide their own transportation. 823 E 3rd St Tulsa, OK 73102 Phone: 816-679-2474

Mar 10, 2018 to Mar 11, 2018 Tulsa Oilers 2017-2018 Season Cheer on the Tulsa Oilers as they take on the Wichita Thunder for two consecutive nights at the BOK Center in downtown Tulsa. Get in on the fast-paced hockey action as these two teams compete for control of the puck. Enjoy a snack and a cold beer while cheering on the team as they battle for victory on the ice. BOK Center 200 S Denver Ave Tulsa, OK 74145 Phone: 918-632-7825

Mar 10, 2018 Josh Abbott Band in Concert Get ready to scoot your boots when the Josh Abbott Band takes over Bob Wills' home stage, bringing their unique version of Red Dirt and Texas country music to Cain's Ballroom. This hardworking band has built a loyal following through years of relentless touring and tight musicianship, along with Abbott's unique voice and hook-heavy songwriting. Don't miss this highly-anticipated show in the heart of the Tulsa Arts District. Cain's Ballroom 423 N Main St Tulsa, OK 74103 Phone: 918-584-2306

Mar 10, 2018 ShamROCK the Rose Located in Broken Arrow's Rose District in the downtown area, ShamROCK the Rose is a celebration of all things green and Irish for St. Patrick's Day. Come have fun amidst the shamrocks and shenanigans of the

event. There will be live entertainment at the outdoor stage, tasty beers to experience, original artwork from local artists and hand-crafted items at vendor stations. The day is complete with green beer and delicious offerings from food trucks in the Tulsa area. Rose District N Main St Broken Arrow, OK 74012 Phone: 918-850-3654 Phone: 918-451-4211

Mar 16, 2018 Bangers & Mash Lunch Kick off your St. Paddy's day weekend with a visit to the Claremore Daily Progress Parking lot for the Bangers & Mash Lunch. At this beloved annual tradition, celebrate the holiday with live music and dancing while enjoying a traditional Irish feast of bangers and mash. After enjoying your lunch, be sure and pick up a commemorative t-shirt. 315 W Will Rogers Blvd

Claremore, OK 74017 Phone: 918-341-5881 Fax: 918-342-0663

Mar 16, 2018 ZZZs in the Seas Sleep with the sharks at the unique ZZZs in the Seas event. During this special Oklahoma Aquarium function in Jenks, get to know the sea creatures swimming in the aquarium's waters. Guests will embark on a self-guided scavenger hunt, flashlight tour and movie early in the night in preparation for the main feature. Once all the exploratory fun has come to an end, spread out your sleeping bag in the Shark Tunnel, Sea Turtle Island or Extreme Amazon exhibits. Oklahoma Aquarium

300 Aquarium Dr Jenks, OK 74037 Phone: 918-296-3474

Mar 16, 2018 St. Paddy's Party Wear your green and celebrate St. Patrick's Day in downtown Claremore. Held in the parking lot of the Main Street Tavern, this annual celebration of Celtic traditions includes local live music, dancing and great food at this annual outdoor party. The festivities kick off with a parade through downtown followed by free admission to this beloved local celebration. Downtown Claremore, OK 74017 Phone: 918-341-5881 Phone: 918-341-2818 Fax: 918-342-0663

Mar 17, 2018 St. Patrick's Day in the Garden Attend the festive St. Patrick's Day in the Garden as spring starts to settle in. Dress in green and tour through Tulsa Botanic Garden in search of lucky four-leaf clovers. Golden rocks and clovers will be scattered throughout the Children's Discovery Garden, the A.R. and Marylouise Tandy Floral Terraces and the Cross Timbers Nature Trail. Kids can turn in up to three of the special rocks and clovers and earn special prizes. Tulsa Botanic Garden 3900 Tulsa Botanic Dr Tulsa, OK 74127 Phone: 918-289-0330

Mar 17, 2018 to Mar 18, 2018 R.K. Gun & Knife Show For a high quality gun show with great prices and selection, visit the R.K. Gun & Knife Show in Tulsa. RK Shows have been putting on quality gun and knife shows for over 20 years and are consistently growing in popularity. Held at Tulsa Expo Square in the Exchange Center, this gun show will feature antique, collectible, vintage and modern firearms. Browse the many booths, talk with experts and take advantage of the great bargains. Grab a friend and head to the R.K. Gun & Knife Show to see what you've been missing. Tulsa Expo Square 4145 E 21st St Tulsa, OK 74114 Phone: 563-927-8176 Fax: 563-927-8207

Mar 20, 2018 to Mar 24, 2018 Spring Break in the Garden Bring the kids to the Tulsa Botanic Garden for this special Spring Break in the Garden series. Families can get in touch with nature during daily events like nature-themed storytelling, crafts and hands-on activities. Each day, the kids will explore a new aspect of nature, starting with the spring equinox on Tuesday, demonstrated by a guided nature hike to look for signs of spring. Wednesday's focus will be seeds, including a lesson on growth and a seed mosaic activity. Flowers will be the topic of Thursday's story time, featuring information on important roles that flowers play. On Friday, hear Master Composter Steve Wood speak about composting and soil before meeting his live worms. To wrap up spring break, on Saturday, families can picnic on the

lawn and take a color walk to see how many different colors they can find in the spring blossoms. Tulsa Botanic Garden 3900 Tulsa Botanic Dr Tulsa, OK 74127 Phone: 918-289-0330

Do You have an event that you would like to share ?

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The Investment Tips Every Woman Should Know

When it comes to being financially secure, having a decent salary is only one part of the puzzle. There's also your savings accounts, your emergency fund, and — *gulp* — your retirement plan. For most people, retirement comes in the form of a 401(k) and that tax-break money is invested through the employer to grow slowly over time.

But how much should you be putting toward your 401(k)? What if you want to get more involved in investing to save for other priorities like college for your kids or additional income? We talked to Jenn Imbeault, VP financial consultant at Fidelity Investments, and Rita Silvan, editor-in-chief at Golden Girl Finance, about their best tips for women looking to invest.

1. Think in percentages

Allocate about 50 percent of your income to living expenses, says Imbeault. Fifteen percent of your take-home income — and that can be including employer 401(k) matches — should go toward retirement. Five percent should go toward emergency savings. If you still have enough money to live the lifestyle you enjoy and put money into extra investments, go for it.

2. Write down your goals

You have to know what you're saving for, says Silvan. "You can have multiple goals — short-term, longer-term — but you need to write them down in a contract with yourself," she says. It will help you understand where to invest and how much and will also help you stick to your plan.

3. This order: Debt, retirement, emergency, extra investment

Paying down high-interest "bad" debt is going to serve you better in the long run, says Imbeault. Your next big focus should be long-term retirement savings and emergency fund savings.

4. You don't have to have a ton of money

"One of the most common misunderstandings women — and many men — have about investing is that you have to have a large sum of money invested or ready to invest to talk with a financial professional," Imbeault says. That's just not true. "There are a wide range of professionals and services available to help you understand your investment options."

5. Know yourself

You have to be able to sleep at night. Your friends might be making a ton of money in one sector or another, but if those sectors are higher-risk than you're comfortable with, they're not for you. "What would you do if the value of your investments dropped 35 percent, which is the typical average drop in a bear market?" Silvan says. "If the idea of that terrorizes you, then invest accordingly."

6. Keep it simple

A surprising amount of people do the work of investing in their 401(k) plans, but don't take the time to roll them over when they join a new company, making it hard to keep track of where large chunks of their money have gone. "Simplify, organize, consolidate," Imbeault says. "Having everything located in one place provides the opportunity to keep track of your investments to make sure they're still lining up with your long-term

goals." It also helps should your family ever need to step in to help with your accounts.

7. You can diversify within a single firm

We hear a lot about diversifying your investments, which typically refers to spreading your money across different industries so that if one struggles, you haven't put all your eggs in one basket. But that doesn't mean you have to become an expert in dozens of sectors. "Diversification can still be accomplished across your investments within one investment firm," Imbeault says.

8. Diversify beyond industry sectors

Consider geography when you're looking to diversify your investments. "Home bias is typical of most investors and it's a costly mistake over the long-term," Silvan says. "This is very easy to do today with low-cost global ETFs — exchange-traded funds."

9. Don't chase returns

Silvan says that although it can be tempting to trade investments frequently, it actually increases your risk. "You have to be right twice," she says. "Once when you buy and once when you sell. Plus, there are frictional costs of trading and taxes to consider."

10. Be wary of high performers

"Buying funds or ETFs that have done very well in the recent past increases the likelihood they will underperform in the future," Silvan says. It's called regression to the mean. "Over time, both high and low performers settle somewhere into the middle range."

11. Stick to the plan

The biggest mistake people make is not sticking to their investment plan, Imbeault says. Writing down the goals is important, but "following the plan will help you achieve them."

Data Master: Karen Deffenbaugh



Library News

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Friday: 9am to 12pm & 1pm to 3pm
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618 Pine (918) 789-3364

Hours:

Tuesday: 10:00am to 7:00pm
Wednesday, Thursday & Friday: 10:00am to 4:00pm
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PO BOX 353, 111 N McCracken Phone: 918-476-4445

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Web: www.eodls.lib.ok.us/jay.html

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420 E. Ferry St. (918) 434-8001

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Closed Saturday, Sunday & Monday

TALALA AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY

106 W Watova St. (918) 275-4540

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Monday and Thursday evening 6pm to 9pm

Saturday 11am to 2pm

VINITA PUBLIC LIBRARY

215 W. Illinois (918) 256-2115

Hours:

Mon., Tues., Wed., & Fri. 11:00am to 6:00pm

Thurs. 11:00am to 7:00pm

Sat. 11:00am to 3:00pm

Closed Sunday

WILL ROGERS LIBRARY

1515 N. Florence, Claremore OK (918) 341-1564

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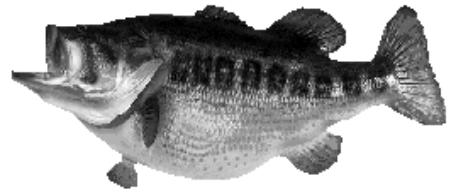
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McDonald's Is Going to Make Happy Meals a Whole Lot Healthier

Get ready to see a healthier Happy Meal menu at McDonald's.

The fast food company announced that by 2022, McDonald's will improve the Happy Meal menu of 120 markets, offering more balanced meals and simplifying its ingredients. McDonald's also aims to be more transparent with nutrition information and "reinforce responsible marketing to children," according to its press release.

The company's five new global Happy Meal goals include making at least half the Happy Meals listed on menus under 600 calories and under 640 milligrams of sodium with less than 10 percent of the calories from saturated fat and less than 10 percent of the calories from added sugar. For reference, only 28 percent of Happy Meals in 20 major markets currently meet these criteria.

In terms of simplifying ingredients, McDonald's will remove artificial flavors and added colors from artificial sources and reduce artificial preservatives. If you remember, the fast food chain made moves in 2016 in the U.S. by removing artificial preservatives from Chicken McNuggets.

Happy Meal options will soon only include a hamburger and four-piece and six-piece Chicken McNuggets, with the small french fries replaced with kids-size fries in this six-piece meal. You won't see the cheeseburger option, but you can still request it if you'd like it. Lastly, McDonald's will reformulate its chocolate milk to reduce the amount of sugar. Until then, you won't see the choco-

late milk option listed, either, but, again, you can ask for it.

Bottled water and the Honest Kids Appley Ever After organic apple juice will both continue to be beverage options.

The improvements to the Happy Meal menu are part of the company's long-term global growth plan and its commitment to Alliance for a Healthier Generation. McDonald's began working with the not-for-profit in 2013 in hopes of increasing its customers' access to fruit, vegetables, low-fat dairy and water.

"We recognize the opportunity that we have to support families as one of the most visited restaurants in the world, and remain committed to elevating our food, celebrating the joy of reading, and helping those in need through Ronald McDonald House Charities," said Steve Easterbrook, McDonald's president and CEO, in a press release. "Given our scale and reach, we hope these actions will bring more choices to consumers and uniquely benefit millions of families, which are important steps as we build a better McDonald's."

When can you expect to see all the aforementioned menu changes in the U.S. specifically? Sooner than you'd expect: by June of this year.

Data Master: Doug Stone

Community Links Of Chelsea 1100 Walnut Chelsea, OK 74016

Ph: (918) 789-2862

Fax (918) 789-5296

Email:

commuitylinks1999@yahoo.com

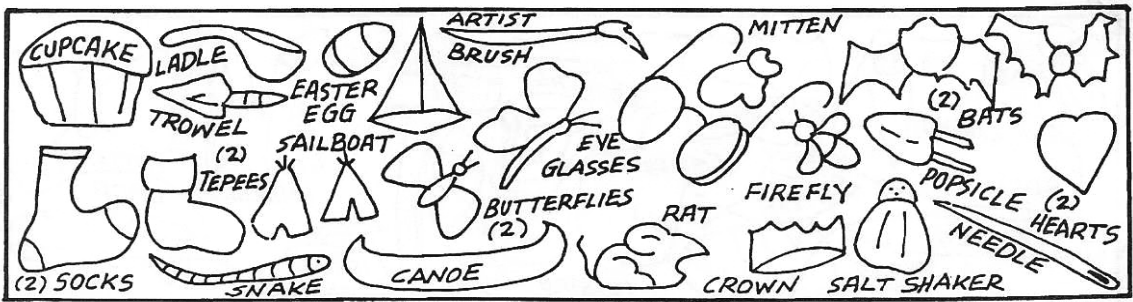
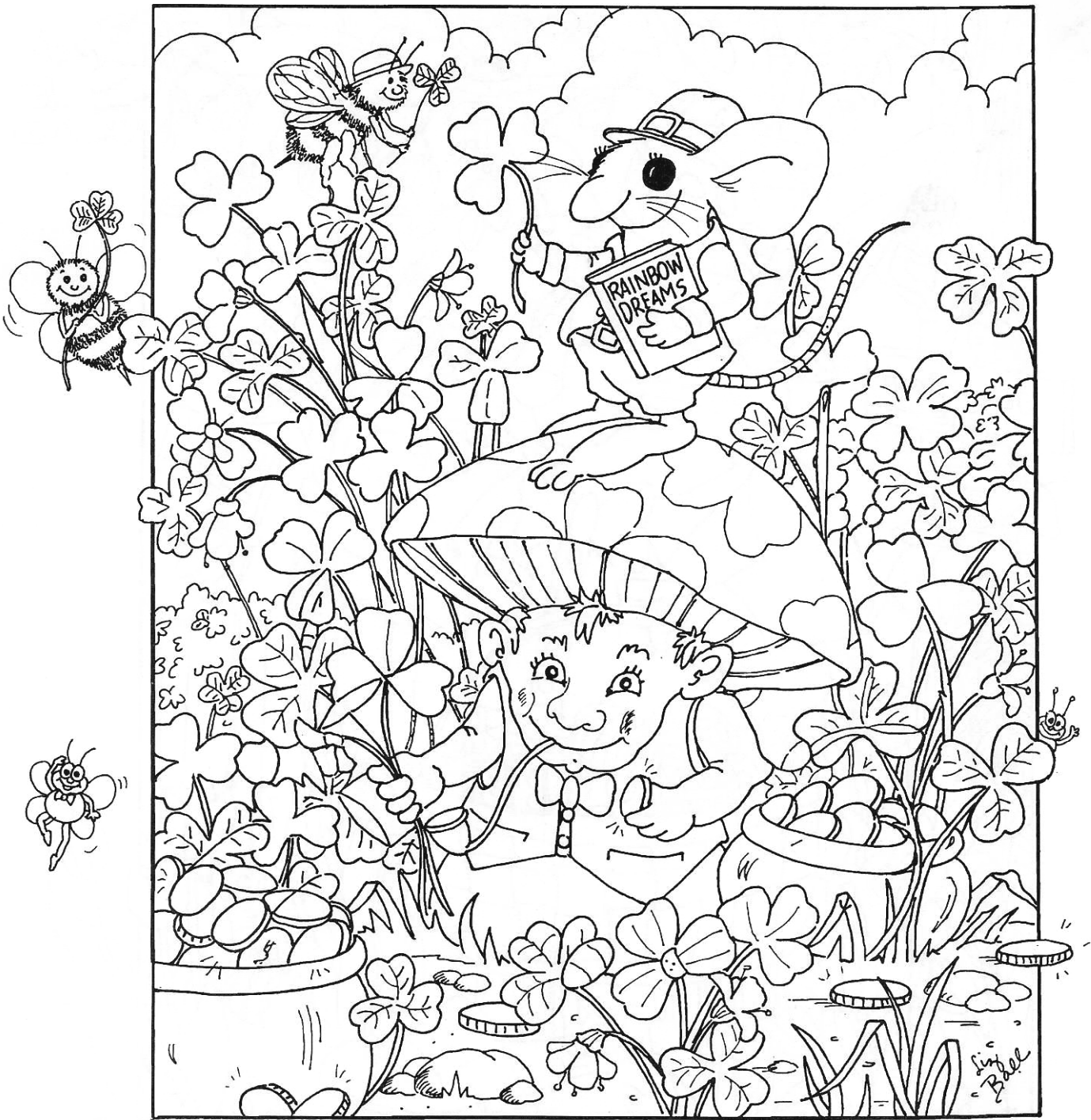
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11 Ways to get motivated to run in the cold weather



When it's cold outside and in the dead of winter with fewer daylight hours, it's easy to lose the motivation to run or work out. The cold weather and dark mornings and evenings don't have to mean that your running routine is compromised. Keep your commitment and stay on track this winter, and your runs will feel even more amazing in the spring.

Make exercising a priority. If you want to do it, you will find a way. Do you want to get up at 5:00 a.m. to run when your warm bed is more inviting? Not really, but you'll find the hardest part is getting up. Once you are dressed and out on the quiet streets, you will be happy. It is a great way to start the day! Plus, when you get off of work, you can play with your kids, take the dog for a walk, do errands and just be happy knowing that you are done with your workout and can relax. Don't use daylight as an excuse — there are ways to safely run in the dark.

Schedule workouts in advance. Look at what workouts you need to do for the week and put them on your calendar, just like an appointment. Schedule your workouts around your other activities. For instance, don't schedule a long run the morning after a late-night party. Be flexible, but it's always good to set an initial time frame for the week.

Keep track of your workouts. Use a training log. After you've completed each workout, check it off on your training log and write down any useful information about that day's run — how did it feel, what were the conditions outside, how long did you go and what was your time. This instant feedback helps you feel accomplished and can help keep you accountable. This also allows you to look back over time and see the progress you have made. If you're feeling stuck in a rut, pull out old training logs and remind yourself of how far you have come since you began. This can help motivate you to keep going and not quit.

Change your attitude. Stop focusing on the negatives, like "I should not eat those fries" or "I better not drink that soda." Start from the inside by saying affirmations when you start each day like, "I am someone who takes care of my body," "I am someone who will accomplish my goals." The difference is that the second set of statements focuses on who you are and what you expect in your life, not just the change you want to make. The affirmations call for action and foster your success. Your attitude will likely decide your success at staying committed.

Remember why you run. It's not selfish. It is good for you. When you are happy, the people around you are happy, too. You will be a better parent, spouse, friend and employee.

Keep your gear nearby. Keep a spare pair of running shoes and some clothes in a drawer at work so that if you have an urge to run at lunch, you can. You can also keep stuff in the trunk of your

car. The cool thing about running is that you can do it almost anywhere, anytime. When you are doing an early morning run or race, lay your stuff out the night before so that you don't have to think — just get dressed and go.

Find a friend. Find a running partner to run with. You can't get lazy when you are accountable to someone else. Plus, it's fun and a great way to catch up with friends. You will be surprised at how fast the time goes when you are chatting with a friend.

Get enough sleep. It is well documented that if you don't get enough sleep, you will not be as productive and your mood is likely to be affected. Set a goal for a steady seven to eight hours each night. If you don't sleep enough, your muscles won't recover from your workouts properly, and you may suffer chronic soreness. Your immune system won't protect you as well from illnesses that are going around if you don't let your body re-charge. If you're getting sick several times a year, that will set back your progress with your workouts and diet and ultimately set back your overall weight loss or wellness progress.

Keep a routine. It is so easy to fall out of routine, especially when our lives are disrupted with life changes like moving or taking a new job or during the holidays. Often times, this is unavoidable; but if you can, keep as much of a routine as possible. Running can play a huge role here. If you can keep your running routine day-by-day or week-by-week, not only will you feel better physically and mentally, but it will give you a sense of regularity and routine, even if the rest of your day is complete chaos.

Run your stress away. If you're feeling stressed, depressed, overwhelmed or run-down from life changes happening in your life, take a break and go for a short run or walk outside. Ten or 20 minutes of exercise can help get your endorphins moving, lower your stress hormones, and help lift your mood.

Reward Yourself. Set small goals and reward yourself for meeting those goals. For example, if you complete all of the week's scheduled workouts, treat yourself to a pedicure or that new color of nail polish that you always wanted. For each workout you complete, give yourself \$1. Once you have enough saved up, treat yourself to that new outfit or Garmin you've been wanting. Stay away from using food as a reward, however. Rewards should be services like a manicure or massage; goods like workout clothes or running gear; or free things like a bubble bath.

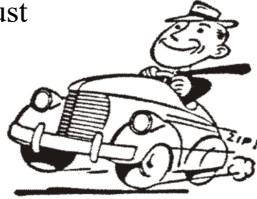
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SECTION 8 HOUSING VOUCHERS ACCEPTED

Facts about Oklahoma



- The title of the official state poem is, "Howdy Folks," by David Randolph Milsten.
- It's a poem about Will Rogers and was written about the dedication of the Will Rogers Memorial in Claremore.
- What counts
- Oklahoma has 3,579,212 people.
- It ranks 27th among the 50 states in population.
- That's an average 50.3 people per square mile. By comparison, New Jersey has 1,134.5 people per square mile.
- 24 percent of Oklahomans are younger than 18.
- 6.9 percent are younger than 5.
- 13.2 percent are 65 and older.
- Eastern Oklahoma gets an average of 56 inches of precipitation annually.
- In the Panhandle, the average is 17 inches.
- The record for single-day rainfall is 15.68 inches. On Oct. 11, 1973, Enid recorded 12 of those inches in 3 hours. It took another 10 hours for the rest to fall.
- Oklahoma's growing season ranges from 168 days in the Panhandle to 240 days along the Red River.
- Oklahoma City has an average of 85 rainy days in a year.
- The highest temperature ever recorded in Oklahoma was 120 degrees, at Tipton on June 27, 1994.
- Lowest temperature ever recorded in Oklahoma was -27 degrees in Vinita on Feb. 13, 1905, and in Watts on Jan. 18, 1930.
- Oklahoma City records an average of 9.5 inches of snow, ice and sleet in a year.
- Oklahoma records an average of 54 tornadoes each year; an average of 15 of them are significant.
- On Nov. 11, 1911, the high at Oklahoma City was 83 degrees. The low was 17 degrees. These are both the record high and the record low for that date.
- 17 species of native animals and bugs are endangered including three kinds of bats, four birds, a fish and five invertebrates.
- Oklahoma ranks fourth in the nation in wheat production.
- The state is fourth in cattle and calf production.
- It's fifth in pecans.
- 67 tribes inhabited Indian Territory.
- Oklahoma is the place where four cultural regions meet: the West, Midwest, South and Southwest.
- Oklahomans spend about 3.5 million days hunting annually. Historically speaking
- The first permanent white settlement was a French trading post in Salina in Mayes County in 1769.

- Fort Gibson and Downingville (Vinita) were the first incorporated towns in 1873.
- The first of 14 flags to fly over Oklahoma was the Royal Standard of Spain, brought here by Francisco Vasquez de Coronado in 1541.
- Sequoyah's given name was George Gist, the cabin he lived in is still standing in Askins, OK.

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Doctors told me I was 'too highly educated' to be sick

Beginning in 2006, I slept 12 hours most nights and often took a two-hour nap in the afternoon. I wasn't lazy — I was exhausted. I talked slowly, moved slowly and had difficulty driving because my brain couldn't keep up.

Loud and fast talking was unbearable, and I couldn't string words together fast enough to understand the books I tried to read. In the rare moments where the fog lifted, I blissfully read, cleaned and lived my life. But always within a matter of hours, the heaviness always came back.

My doctors had chalked my symptoms up to just about everything: fibromyalgia, depression and even somatoform disorder, which is basically physical pain because of psychological problems. The disorder is predicated on the assumption that the patient is so concerned with her symptoms that she's actually causing them to happen.

"I can't believe this!" my aunt yelled, when the highly regarded neurologist handed me information on somatoform disorder. But when her own guess — lupus — didn't pan out either, even she began to question the validity of my symptoms. Not that I blamed her. I often questioned their validity myself.

When an earlier test for multiple sclerosis came back negative, that doctor said my symptoms might have to get worse before any test would show what I had, which turned out to be the most accurate feedback I'd ever get until my diagnosis. I just didn't know I'd have to wait five years — through grad school (where I missed half the classes I took and taught) and two years on disability, during which I made \$300 a month writing \$10-a-day mini-articles.

While on disability, I was assigned to the low-income state clinic. The doctors there worked mandatory hours during their residencies, and none seemed very happy about it.

One doctor told me I was too highly educated to be sick. My assigned social worker said I must have OCD because I kept talking about things I couldn't do.

Since I was brown-skinned (and worse than that, black), most doctors assumed I was just being lazy — apparently "too educated" to let myself fall into such aberrant thinking. Other health concerns complicated things further, as I would soon be diagnosed with very real depersonalization disorder and already had a premenstrual dysphoric disorder diagnosis, both of which also played into my brain fog. Additionally, since both conditions have anxiety at their center, doctors brushed off my concerns as an inability to handle daily life.

When I began having waking hallucinations, I didn't see a doctor right away. After all, it's scary to admit to hearing voices, and somatoform disorder places patients in a double bind: Seeking help for symptoms is believed to be a symptom in and of itself. I didn't want to appear obsessively focused on my concerns, but at the same time, I desperately wanted my life back.

My hallucinations always happened between sleep and waking. First, I often hallucinated my best friend and roommate murmuring on the phone or music playing in a neighboring condo only to fully wake up and realize everything was quiet.

Then the hallucinations became more ominous. I started seeing people who weren't in the room when I slept on a couch (and thus wasn't sleeping as deeply). I began to develop

"tricks" to test whether I was asleep or awake, but they all fed me false information. During one hallucination, a friend touched my arm and said, "See, I'm really here." During another, I was sure I passed my hand under the overhead light, and when it dimmed, I knew I "must" be awake.

Hallucinations weren't my only new problem. I also started experiencing sleep paralysis, which occurs when your body doesn't move through the normal stages of sleep. I would often open my eyes and try to move but be unable to do so. I would think I had gotten out of bed, only to fully wake up and find myself still prostrate. This would happen over and over again in a single day.

I was with a pharmacist friend when it finally dawned on me that I might have a sleep disorder. No doctor had ever suggested this, even though I realized I had all the classic symptoms.

My doctor at the clinic somewhat reluctantly agreed to give me a referral to the sleep medicine unit at the University of Washington Medical Center. When I finally got there, the doctor wasn't surprised at all that it took me so long to get proper help.

"Doctors never think about sleep issues, but your symptoms fit the bill," he explained.

Unlike my other doctors, he looked me straight in the eyes and treated me as an equal instead of a problem patient. It was such a different experience that I even wondered if the entire unit was a scam.

Soon I participated in a sleep study, and the results showed that I wake up gasping for breath 10 times an hour throughout the night. I had been so sleep-deprived that I had no knowledge of these disruptions, which is true for most people with the condition.

I received a CPAP machine, which continuously blows air into my nose as I sleep. After a few months, I was able to get a job. After a couple of years, I got an apartment, finished my thesis and graduated cum laude.

I still need more sleep than most, but I'm glad I'm no longer sleeping through life. My experience continually reminds me that it's important to stand up for myself, even when I have to fight to be heard.

DATA MASTER: KaREN DEFFENBAUGH

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Being scared of your pets doesn't make me terrible human being

I'm afraid of of pets – very afraid. This is difficult for several reasons. The first being that there are animals everywhere. My backyard aligns with a patch of woods, and at any moment you might turn around to find a bunny sizing you up from across the lawn. Then there are the hamsters in elementary school classrooms, petting zoos, a friend's new puppy, the neighbor who doesn't like leashes, and pigeons everywhere. I'm telling you, it is a minefield out there for people like me, and animal lovers will never truly understand that.

And I mean that – they really don't. Some go so far as to hate me, if not blatantly, then at least covertly and on the internet. In their minds, "She's afraid of animals" gets translated to "She hates animals," and from there it's only a small leap to "She is a cold and heartless individual with no love for anything adorable." This is not me being paranoid. How many memes have we seen about people who don't like animals being assholes or not having souls?

In the haters' defense, I guess it does seem kind of weird to be like, "Back off with your precious fluffy kitten!" But I don't know. I'm 44 years old, and it is what it is at this point. And I guess that is what I really need to tell the rest of the pet owners out there.

Not the ones who know me well enough to just deal with me, and not the ones who hate me. I speak here of the ones who believe they can cure my fear in much the same way as those Christian fundamentalists aim to "cure" homosexuality. The following are some of the things they might say with the best of intentions, but always, always with the worst of results.

"He won't hurt you." It's as if these words get scrambled on the way into my brain, so that what I actually hear is, "He hasn't bitten or viciously mauled anyone yet today." Just look up the word "animal" on Thesaurus.com. Some synonyms include: beastly, brute, feral, wild, untamed. Antonyms? Gentle. Mild.

Egads.

"They can smell fear." Oh, well that's perfect. Let me just take my fear off and stick it in my purse then. Or better yet, I'll run out and leave it in the car. I can't imagine why I brought it in with me in the first place! Listen, I am perfectly aware that animals can smell fear and why do you not understand that this makes me even more afraid?

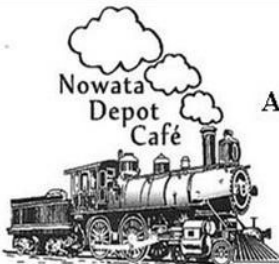
"Just pet him!" This one usually only comes from dog owners, and I hate it because either way, no one wins. If I don't pet the dog, then I'm snubbing the person's four-legged baby, which I do understand is just as offensive as snubbing a person's human baby. Not only that, but I'm now considered to be inflexible, uncooperative and generally no fun.

On the other hand, if I do pet the dog, I risk offending its owner just as much as if I'd refused. Mainly because of the way I look while petting a domestic animal, which is similar to the way anyone else looks while petting a pterodactyl, hesitant with absolutely no trace of affection. Only now, I have heart palpitations, and I've led the animal to believe that I want to be its friend, and that further petting might ensue at any moment. Now little Spike or Sammy or Sunshine will not leave my side. It gets awkward very quickly.

"You'll like my dog." I feel bad about this, I do, but no. I will not ever like any dog. Still, it also makes me kind of mad. I wouldn't find out that someone is violently afraid of heights and immediately say, "No, no, no, you'll like the rooftop terrace of my skyscraper!" "Oh, you say you're agoraphobic? Come on, what's to be afraid of, you'll have fun at my party. " "Terrified of clowns? That's just because you haven't met the ones at my circus!"

But it's OK, I at least have David Sedaris on my side. When I met him at a book signing and I mentioned I didn't have pets he replied, "Good for you. Who needs pets? We have nature – that should be enough." So at least someone understand how I feel.

DATA MASTER: ALYSSA HOLLINGSWORTH



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Dealing With the Fear & Guilt That Comes After a Major Tragedy

So many of us woke up this morning still processing the news of another mass shooting: this time in a high school in South Florida. Learning of this huge loss of life didn't exactly make us ready to face the rest of the week ahead — in fact, a lot of people probably had the same question: How am I supposed to function and carry on like it's a normal day after what happened in Florida?

Even if we don't have a direct connection to the shooting in Parkland, Florida, that left 17 people dead, it's completely normal to react to the news with a mix of feeling helpless, guilty, depressed, anxious and angry. Logically, we know feeling bad about the shooting won't actually help anyone, but we also need time to process the tragic events and not pretend it didn't happen.

Carolyn Wagner, a licensed professional counselor and psychotherapist practicing in Wilmette, Illinois, agrees, saying, "Our lives and day need to go on as usual," but "this should not be confused with ignoring what happened or not taking the time to think or talk about it." Along the same lines, Tracee Dunblazier, a grief counselor, cautions that "ignoring the news or pushing away the emotion doesn't work, as it only saves the feelings to be processed for another time."

Dr. John Santopietro, president and medical director of Silver Hill Hospital in Connecticut, was involved as a psychiatrist in the Sandy Hook shooting and has seen firsthand how people come together to survive during tragedies, as well as how devastating these events can be to a community. Unfortunately, he says that there is no formula for when someone should return to work and their usual routine after an event like the one in Florida, but emphasizes the importance of watching for signs of stress in anyone who has been affected, including changes in eating and sleeping habits, major behavioral changes or depressed or anxious moods, for example.

Fear is completely normal

When something bad happens, it makes sense that it

makes us afraid or anxious. In fact, Dr. John Mayer, a clinical psychologist, says that being fearful is a good psychological and emotional protective mechanism during times of danger, and it's OK to reexamine your behavior in terms of crowds and public events and be mindful of your surroundings.

"Even if we are not directly impacted, this type of public mass tragedy does have an effect on us," Wagner says. "It shakes our sense of security and naturally leads us to start thinking about what it would have been like to be one of the people there or to have a loved one there. This is a normal reaction and it deserves some reflection."

So how long is it normal to live with this fear? Dr. Nekeshia Hammond, a psychologist, says that experiencing these emotions for a few days or even a week isn't uncommon, but if they last more than a few weeks and are to the point of affecting your ability to function in your work or family life, it may be time to seek out a mental health professional.

Dr. Melissa Flint, associate professor of clinical psychology at Midwestern University, echoes that sentiment, saying, "The most important part is that you seek help if you need it." This can be done by calling 911 in an immediate crisis or a mental health hotline.

Guilt is normal too

You know that feeling where next to the tragedy everything else seems frivolous? According to Hammond and Lindsey Pratt, a psychotherapist in New York City who specializes in trauma, that's a form of survivor's guilt and another common reaction to the events.

"Coping with this guilt may have you questioning the senselessness of violence and feeling guilty about continuing on with the normalcy of the day-to-day," Pratt says. "However, it's im-

portant to consider that experiencing both joy and sorrow does not in any way minimize the pain of others.”

Dunblazier explains that “guilt is the presence of unexpressed grief and heartbreak” and that expressing anguish through crying or an emotional response is a skill set and not weakness.

But why are we feeling guilty about something we had nothing to do with? Dunblazier says it’s a common experience to transfer your grief and anguish from things you can’t control — like these mass tragedies — to things you feel you are in control of, like your friends, family, work or social situations. In this case, she says it’s important to practice self-awareness by asking yourself what you’re feeling and where it originated as well as taking five minutes at the end of the day to reflect on your emotions and release them.

One thing to watch out for, says Dr. Paul Hokemeyer, an addictions therapist and certified clinical trauma professional, is destructive forms of self-medicating, specifically excessive alcohol consumption, overeating and another reckless behavior. Engaging in these will only add to your sense of hopelessness, he adds.

Getting back into a routine can help
Yes, the mere act of going about with your regular routine when a major tragedy just occurred could be the source of guilt, but it could also do you some good.

Dr. Robin Goodman, a licensed clinical psychologist and art therapist with particular expertise in trauma and bereavement, suggests balancing what it’s necessary in your life to continue to do with what you can do to help others. Along the same lines, it’s important to stay engaged in some routine activities — even if you’re not at full speed.

“Recognize that doing your regular job can be helpful to recovering and maintaining perspective,” Goodman says. “Yet at the same time, it can be a time for reflection and awareness about one’s life. Individuals can pay attention to these thoughts and feelings and consider what to do with them over time rather than immediately.”

Limit your media exposure
There is a fine line between staying informed and obsessively watching a video of the aftermath of the shooting over and over. Julie Barthels, a licensed clinical social worker in Illinois and co-author of *Resilience Revolution: A Workbook on How to Stay Sane in an Insane World*, says that too much media coverage “reinforced the horror of it and does not allow you the opportunity to process the emotions that come with it.”

Similarly, Hammond suggests limiting your intake of social media as well as news outlets. “If it feels like too much to process all of the details, videos and articles that emerge, be sure to take a break for your mental health,” she adds.

Avoid negative friends & family members

Whenever something bad — or good — happens, you know there are certain family members and/or friends who will have strong opinions about it and perhaps get you all riled up. There’s a time and place for those people — and this isn’t it, says Richale Reed, a therapist practicing in North Carolina. Instead, reach out to people who will help you process what happened in a constructive way.

Turn thoughts & feelings into productive actions
Several of the mental health professionals suggested taking some sort of action as a way of proactively dealing with your feelings of helplessness. This can range from doing things that will help you personally to those that also impact the community. Giving blood and finding meaningful volunteer opportunities are always good options. In addition, Wagner suggests doing things like reaching out to your loved ones to let them know how much they mean to you and making an emergency plan with your family so you know how to respond should something like this happen to you.

“In these moments, finding ways to express compassion where we are able, in our spheres of influence, become the ways we can make a small impact in our worlds that feel so out of control,” Flint adds.

DATA MASTER: NIKKI HAMILTON



These Household Products Could Cause Birth Defects

Although we've known for a while that many common household products can make us sick, it can be hard to switch up longstanding cleaning routines. But if you're looking for another reason to ditch some of those chemical-heavy products, a new study suggests that the use of two compounds in particular could result in birth defects.

Research out of the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine and the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech found a connection between two chemicals used in products containing disinfectants and preservatives and neural tube birth defects in both mice and rats — the kind that results in spina bifida and anencephaly in humans.

The chemicals, known as quaternary ammonium compounds — or “quats” — are found in products we use every day, like cleaners, laundry detergent, fabric softener, shampoo, conditioner and eye drops.

"These chemicals are regularly used in the home, hospital, public spaces, and swimming pools," said Terry Hrubec, associate professor of anatomy at the VCOM-Virginia campus and research assistant professor in the veterinary college's Department of Biomedical Sciences and Pathobiology. "Most people are exposed on a regular basis."

Hrubec and her team found that the birth defects occur when both males and females — or just one parent — were exposed to the chemicals. This is significant, Hrubec said, because the fact that birth defects were seen

when only the father was exposed to the chemicals means that we need to rethink our concept of prenatal care to include fathers.

And it gets worse. The research found that the mice and rats didn't even need to come in physical contact with the chemicals to see the dangerous consequences. Just being in the same room as the quat-based cleaners was enough to cause birth defects. Hrubec and her team also observed increased birth defects in rodents for two generations after stopping exposure to the chemical compounds.

But so far, only mice and rats have been involved in the clinical trials. What does this mean for humans?

"We are asked all of the time, 'You see your results in mice. How do you know that it's toxic in humans?'" Hrubec said. "Our research on mice and rats shows that these chemicals affect the embryonic development of these animals. Since rodent research is the gold standard in the biomedical sciences, this raises a big red flag that these chemicals may be toxic to humans as well."

Quats were first introduced in the 1950s — before the standardization of toxicity studies. Although some chemical companies claim to have conducted their own tests, none were ever published. Today, these compounds are regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency.

DATA MASTER: TINO HENSLEY

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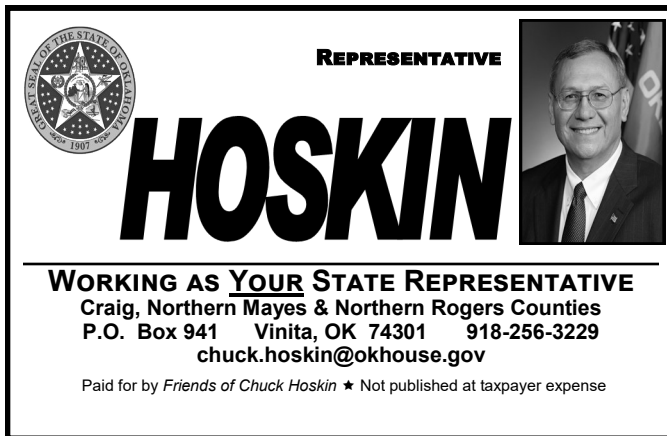
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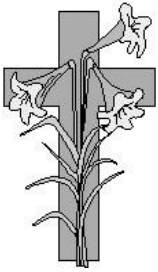


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The way I understand it, a guide is one who has been where you want to go, has fished for what you want to fish for, and caught what you want to catch. He knows all the right places, because he has been there, lived through it, and brought back the fish to eat.

The Lord Jesus walked the dirt roads of this earth. He lived through all the circumstances of life. He knows what we are going through. He knows the places to go, the best way to walk. He's the only man ever to walk this earth who didn't sin. "This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses since he had the same temptations we do, though he never once gave way to them and sinned." Hebrews 4:15 The Living Bible.

"I will instruct you (says the Lord) and guide you along the best pathway for your life; I will advise you and watch your progress." Psalms 32:8

God is our great Guide in everything we do. Where He leads me, I will follow.

DATA MASTER: STEVE BURDICK

Our neighbor man fished all the time. He fished for crappie, bass, catfish, I guess just about every kind of fish there was. I remember the time he came home from fishing with a giant turtle, and all of us kids played with it. Some even had their pictures taken riding on the back of the turtle.

As far as we were concerned, he didn't work. He just played around and fished all the time. As I grew up, I learned that he was a well-known fishing guide in northeast Oklahoma, maybe the best in all of Oklahoma. When people planned a fishing trip on Grand Lake, they frequently hired him to take them fishing, since he knew when the fish were biting, where they were located, what the fish were biting on.

I don't know much about fishing but our neighbor Dutch Faulconer did, and because Dutch had fished so much in Grand Lake, he was a great fishing guide.

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



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