



Welcome to
Wellness Online
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June is Men's Health Month

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Why Do Men Skip Health Tests?

Women live 5.1 years longer on average than men. Could men's avoidance of doctors and routine checkups have anything to do with that?

Former President Bill Clinton admitted he ignored his chest pain for several months. He had also stopped taking a drug his doctor prescribed to lower his cholesterol. Extreme symptoms finally got him to a doctor—who rushed him into heart surgery.



The difference between men and women

It's a fact that women are quicker to see a doctor when they develop symptoms. In contrast, men are more likely to ignore symptoms and hope they go away. Often, by the time a man sees a doctor, his symptoms may be severe and harder to manage.

Men are 24 percent less likely than women to have visited a doctor in the past year, according to recent U.S. government statistics. For an African American or Hispanic male, the odds of having seen a doctor are even lower. The same is true for men ages 18 to 44.

Not seeing a doctor regularly means that you lose out on important health screenings or an early diagnosis. You can feel fine, but still have conditions such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure that need treatment. Men may also miss out on preventive care. They are a lot more likely than women to need hospital care for illnesses that could have been prevented (pneumonia, for example) or complications from diseases like diabetes or heart failure.

Is seeing a doctor like asking for directions?

The rap on men is that they don't ask for directions when lost. Perhaps they think they don't need a doctor's help either.

Men's attitudes about physicals may have come from their own fathers who avoided doctors. And some boys grew up with the message that expressing pain or sickness was a sign of weakness.

According to more than 1,000 men taking part in a 2007 survey commissioned by the American Academy of Family Physicians:

- Thirty-six percent said that they see a doctor only when "extremely sick."
- Fifty-five percent did not have a routine physical in the last year.
- Almost one in five, age 55 or older, had not been screened for colon cancer.

Men also tend to be less willing than women to discuss their health. Women talk freely about breast lumps, depression, or urinary problems to a friend or a doctor. For some men, talking to a doctor or spouse may be embarrassing if the subject involves their genitals, bowels, or mental health.

Men's health is women's work

Women are usually the gatekeepers of health in the family. They are often the ones who make medical appointments for other family members. Many men will not see a doctor unless prodded by the women in their lives.

If you're a man, you can learn from women that getting suggested screenings and checkups can lead to a longer, healthier life. Early detection and treatment of cholesterol and blood pressure problems can prevent a heart attack or stroke. Detecting a tumor before it has spread can make the difference in whether or not a cancer is treatable.

If you are a woman with a man in your life, keep nudging your guy to exercise (with his doctor's OK), eat nutritiously, and seek appropriate medical care for his age and family history. In the AAFP survey, 80 percent of men with wives or girlfriends said their partner helped convince them to see a doctor. Being accused of nagging in this case is a small price to pay for possibly saving a loved one's life.

Is Your Snoring Affecting Your Relationship?

Snoring can keep you—and your partner—from getting a good night's sleep. Following these tips can help.

Sam and Kate have a happy marriage, but you wouldn't know it by their sleeping arrangements. Because of his snoring, Sam often migrates to the couch or the guest room so that his wife can get a good night's sleep.



Six out of 10 adults say they snore. Most of them are men. While it's often the subject of jokes, snoring is no laughing matter for the couples it affects. The noise can impair the sleep quality of everyone within earshot—including the person snoring.

Not getting a good night's rest leads to daytime sleepiness. That can impair your thinking and concentration, which may affect your job performance and driving ability.

What causes snoring?

Anything that affects your air flow can cause snoring. The sound comes from the vibration of soft tissue in the back of the throat. When air tries to pass through a narrowed airway, the vibration is heard as snoring.

Snoring could be triggered by:

- Eating too much before bed
- Smoking

- Your sleeping position
- Alcohol, drugs, and/or sedatives
- Age—older people often snore because of weaker muscles
- Obesity
- Enlarged tonsils or adenoids
- Nasal congestion

Is it sleep apnea?

For some, snoring can be a sign of sleep apnea. With this disorder, the airways in your nose, mouth, or throat can close completely. Breathing typically stops for 10 to 30 seconds. This can happen 30 to 300 times a night. Large tonsils, the tongue, or the uvula (the fleshy appendage in the back of your throat) may be the cause.

Sleep apnea can be dangerous. It increases your risk for heart attack, high blood pressure, and stroke. You're more likely to have it if you're male, overweight, or over age 40, but it can affect anyone.

Your doctor can help determine if your snoring is related to apnea. Or he or she may refer you to a sleep specialist for diagnosis and treatment.

Tips for a peaceful slumber

Mild or moderate snoring that is not caused by an underlying chronic condition can often be relieved with some of the tips below. For more serious cases, a doctor may suggest other treatments. These range from wearing a device to regulate breathing at night to surgery.

Lose excess weight.

Extra body weight, especially around the neck, puts more pressure on breathing passages. Even a modest weight loss can help ease snoring.

Avoid cigarette smoke.

Kick the habit if you do smoke and avoid secondhand smoke if you don't. It may reduce nasal and lung congestion that may be causing snoring.

Avoid sleep aids, alcohol, and cold medicines.

They can cause the throat muscles to relax, which can lead to snoring.

Avoid large meals before bed.

A full stomach puts pressure on the diaphragm. This limits breathing passages.

Run a humidifier.

This may help stop snoring for some.

Elevate your head.

Sleeping with your head slightly raised takes some pressure off the airway. Try putting blocks under the bedposts at the head of the bed, or prop yourself up with pillows.

Sleep on your side.

Snoring is more likely if you are lying on your back. Try tying a tennis ball or other soft object to your back to keep you sleeping on your side.

Try nasal strips.

Over-the-counter nasal strips may give you relief if you're congested.

If you snore heavily, it's best to see your doctor for a thorough exam. Snoring can signal underlying health problems, such as sleep apnea, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, and heart disease.

Snoring can be managed in most cases. With proper care, you (or your mate) will no longer have to retreat to the couch at night and you'll both be back in bed together.



Depression and Men: Key Gender Differences

Men and women may have the same symptoms of depression. The way both experience symptoms, though, is where the similarities end.

The symptoms of depression are universal. But when it comes to how people experience and cope with those symptoms, gender patterns often emerge.

Twice as many women as men suffer depression each year, and women are more likely to seek treatment for it. Women tend to be more up front about feelings of sadness, worthlessness, guilt and a loss of interest in favorite activities.

Men may acknowledge that they have fatigue, irritability and sleep disturbances. Or they may lose interest in work or hobbies. The depression can get worse, though, when they don't acknowledge their feelings, ask for help or seek treatment. Men who don't get help can end up:

- Turning to alcohol or drugs
- Discouraged
- Angry
- Irritable
- Abusive

Men who attempt to hide their depression may also work compulsively, behave recklessly, take risks and put themselves in harm's way.

Getting help

It is important that men talk to their doctors about how they're feeling and ask for help. With a diagnosis and proper care for depression, the great majority of people respond to treatment. Treatment usually involves antidepressant drugs, psychotherapy or a combination of both. Managing depression can help relieve unnecessary suffering, improve the chances for recovery from other illnesses and prolong a productive life.

Source4Women Online Seminar

Fuel Up to Play

Kathleen Zelman, MPH, RD

June 14, 2016, 12:30 p.m. ET, 11:30 a.m. CT, 10:30 a.m. MT, 9:30 a.m. PT

Have you always wanted to excel in your favorite sport? Or maybe you want to give your child the competitive edge on the playing field. From weekend warriors to first time marathon runners, to everyone who aims to be physically active, this seminar may be for you. Join us for this presentation that is designed to enlighten you on the energizing role and important timing of food; the nutrients and fluids needed before, during and after exercise; sports drinks and supplements; and to help you with your performance.



To register for an upcoming Source4Women seminar, visit www.source4women.com and click on "Online Seminars & Events." All seminars are recorded and archived for viewing after the live seminar date.

We Dare You!

Test your health insurance knowledge with our June dares!

We Dare You to:

1. Answer a quiz question about understanding your medical benefits.
2. Watch a video and share your opinion.



3. Play the concentration game and match questions you might ask at your doctor's visit.

Participate in one or more of the dares for a chance to win a \$400 Visa gift card! [Click here to get started!](#) #WeDareYou

Health Tip

Do you want peace of mind? Click [here](#) to find out which screenings and immunizations are important in maximizing and protecting your most valuable asset - your health!



Healthy Recipe: Beef and Wild Mushroom Crostini

Yield: 12 appetizer-sized servings

Ingredients:

1 14 ounce New York strip steak – season to taste
 2 cooked Portobello mushrooms - diced fine
 2 tablespoons roasted red pepper - diced fine
 ½ cup basil pesto
 Salt and pepper to taste
 12 slices toasted sourdough bread - cut in 2" squares

Directions:

Cook steak to desired temperature. Once steak is cool enough to handle, dice into small pieces. Mix the steak with mushrooms, peppers and pesto. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Place small amount of mix on top of crostini.

Nutrition Facts:

Calories: 183
 Fat: 12g
 Saturated Fat: 3g
 Cholesterol: 21mg
 Protein: 10g
 Carbohydrates: 11g
 Fiber: 3g
 Sodium: 266mg



Source: Chef Tre Wilcox

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